



ROCKET TO NEW WORLDS WITH "TOMMY TOMORROW"



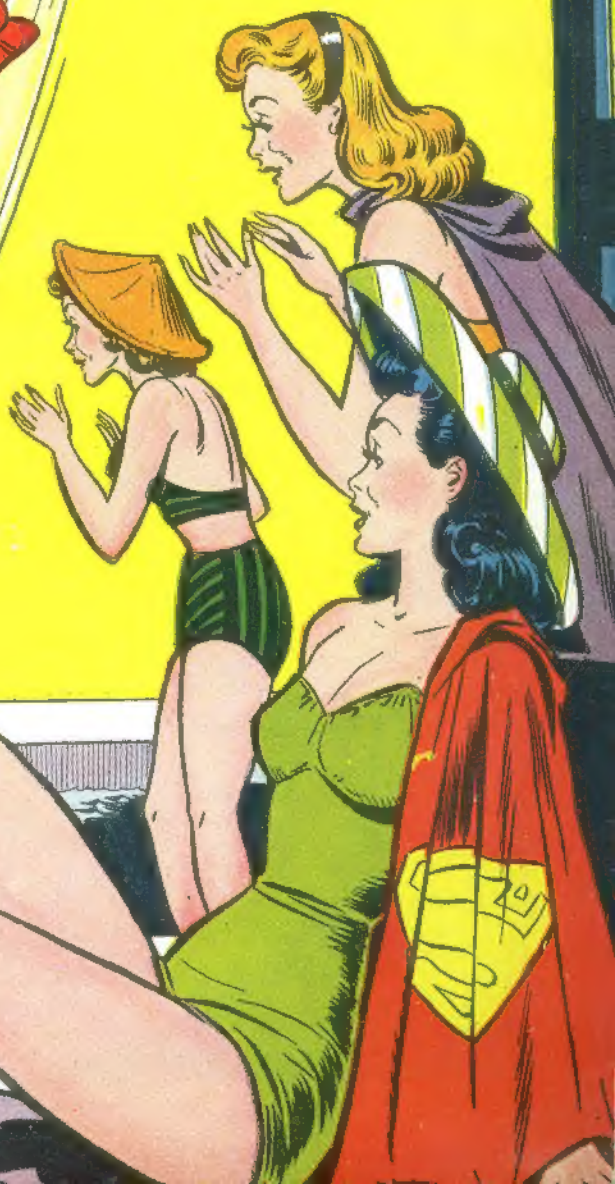
TEN CENTS

SEPT. NO. 136

ACTION COMICS

52
PAGES

Featuring
THE LATEST
SUPERMAN
THRILLER



SUPERMAN



USING HIS MIGHTY POWERS, SUPERMAN HAS PERFORMED THE GREATEST FEATS IN HISTORY TO HELP THE HELPLESS, AND TO CRUSH WRONGDOING! YES, AS EVERYONE KNOWS, HE HAS ALWAYS SOUGHT TO EVADE PUBLICITY AND GLORY! IMAGINE, THEN, THE ASTONISHMENT OF EVERYONE, AND PARTICULARLY LOIS LANE, WHEN THE MAN OF STEEL GOES PUBLICITY-CRAZY, AND BECOMES KNOWN IN METROPOLIS AS...

SUPERMAN, SHOW-OFF!

BE SURE
TO GET A GOOD
PICTURE OF ME!

LOOK AT THAT
BIG HAM...THAT
HAM OF STEEL!



ACTION COMICS, No. 136. Sept., 1949. Published monthly by National Comics Publications, Inc., 480 Lexington Ave., New York 17, N. Y. Whitney Ellsworth, Editor. Entered as second class matter April 4, 1938 at the Post Office at New York, N. Y. under the act of March 3, 1879. Yearly subscription in the U. S. \$1.50 including postage. Foreign, \$3.00 in American funds. For advertising rates address Richard A. Feldon & Co., 205 E. 42nd

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Printed in U.S.A.



TO CITY EDITOR PERRY WHITE OF THE DAILY PLANET, COMES A SURPRISING MESSAGE ONE AFTERNOON--

MR. WHITE, SUPERMAN SENDS WORD THAT HE'S DOING A BIG STUNT, AND IF YOU SEND REPORTERS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS, YOU CAN GET THE STORY!

THAT'S STRANGE... SUPERMAN ALWAYS AVOIDS PUBLICITY!



BUT REPORTER CLARK KENT KNOWS ALL ABOUT IT...FOR HE IS REALLY SUPERMAN.

HELLO, EVERYBODY! I JUST FINISHED THE STUNT...HOLDING UP THE WHOLE BRIDGE SO THEY COULD PUT A NEW PIER UNDER THE OTHER END!

THEN WE'RE TOO LATE TO TAKE PICTURES!



BUT THIS IS A SWELL CHANCE TO GET A GOOD STORY ON HIM LOIS! EVERYTHING SUPERMAN DOES IS FRONT-PAGE NEWS!

AND CLARK KENT ISN'T HERE, SO HE'LL MISS ANOTHER SCOOP!



DON'T WORRY, I'LL BE HAPPY TO DO THE STUNT ALL OVER AGAIN SO YOU CAN GET PICTURES OF ME DOING IT!

WHY, HE SEEMS TO WANT HIS PICTURE TAKEN!



A MOMENT LATER...

BE SURE TO GET GOOD PHOTOGRAPHS! I'LL TURN A LITTLE SO MY FACE WILL SHOW BETTER!

BOY, SUPERMAN IS REALLY COOPERATING NOW!

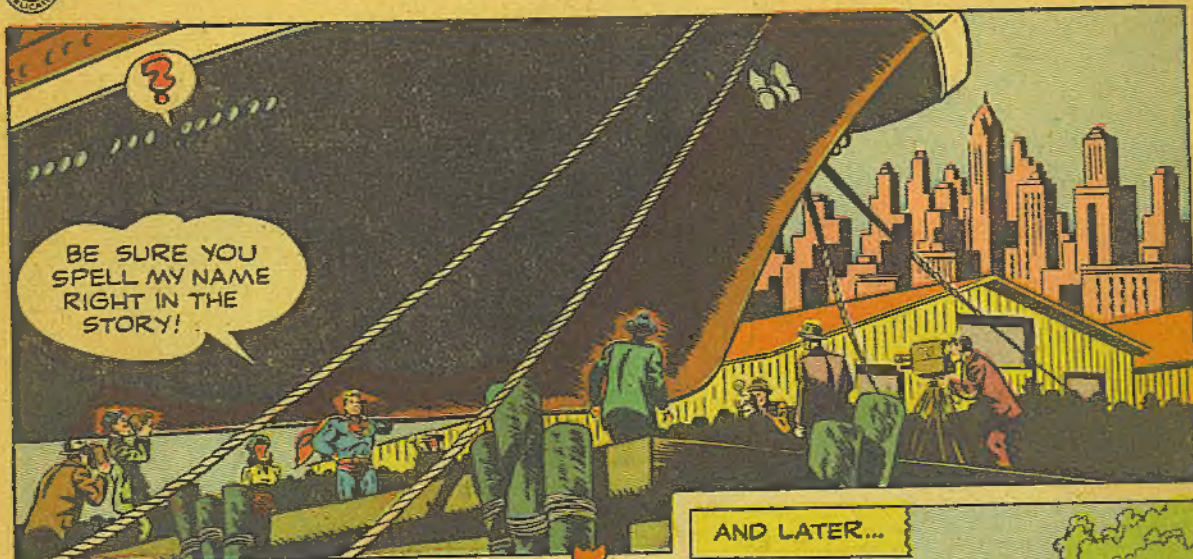


SOON...

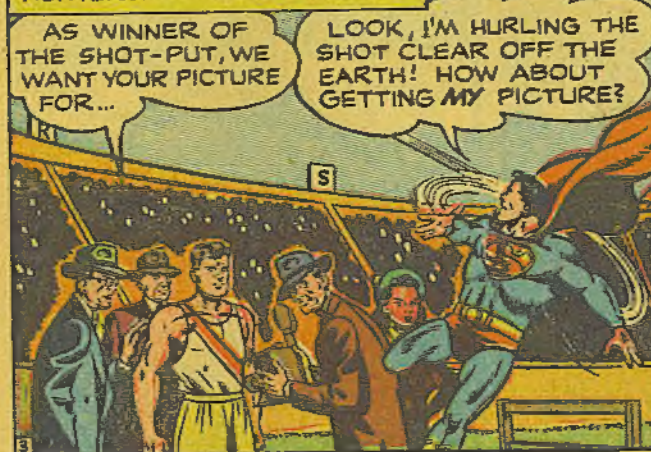
WANT SOME MORE PICTURES OF ME? HOW ABOUT ME HOLDING THAT SHIP UP OUT OF THE WATER? ...THAT WOULD MAKE A GOOD STORY!

SURE!

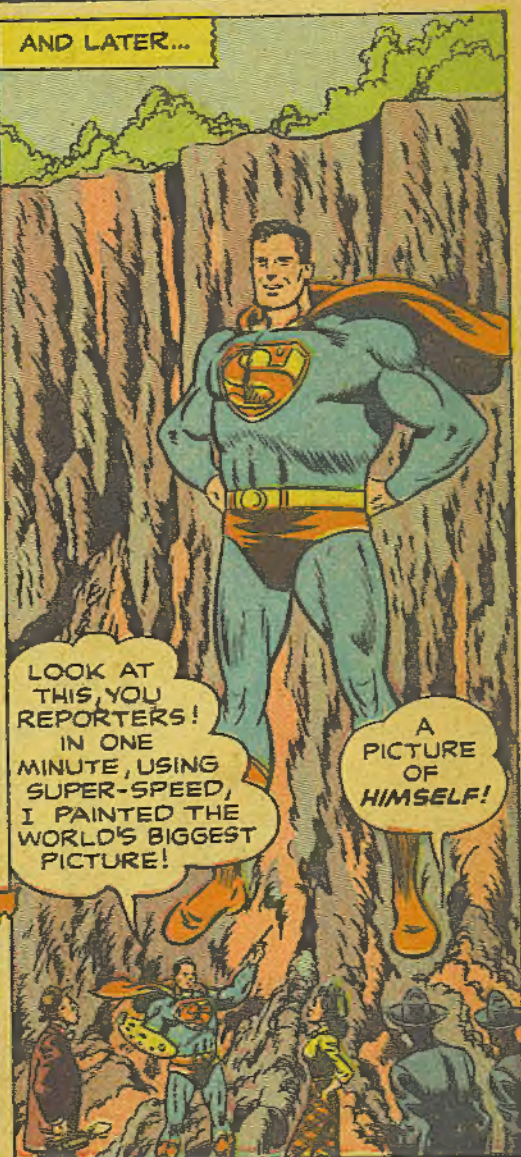




SOON, ASTONISHED NEWSPAPERMEN REALIZE THAT SUPERMAN HAS BECOME A SUPER-HEADLINE-HUNTER. AT A TRACK-MEET...



AND LATER...



GET THIS! I'M DESTROYING THIS CONDEMNED BUILDING WITH MY LITTLE PINKY!!

WHAT A SHOW-OFF HE'S BECOME! THE HAM OF STEEL!!

IT'S A SUDDEN YEN THAT WILL SOON WEAR OFF!

BUT LOIS' PREDICTION IS WRONG, FOR, A FEW DAYS LATER...

AS MAYOR OF METROPOLIS, I LAY THIS CORNERSTONE...

WAIT! I'LL BUILD THE WHOLE BUILDING IN TEN MINUTES' TIME! WATCH ME!

And THE FOLLOWING DAY...

IT'S TANALURNER, THE MOVIE STAR! HOW ABOUT AN AUTOGRAPH?

WANT MY AUTOGRAPH INSTEAD?

AW, WE'RE TIRED OF YOUR SHOWING OFF!

THAT GOES FOR US... AND FOR OUR PAPERS' READERS, TOO!

BUT I'M GOING TO PERFORM AN EVEN GREATER FEAT NOW! I'M GOING TO MOVE A MOUNTAIN... BALD PEAK!

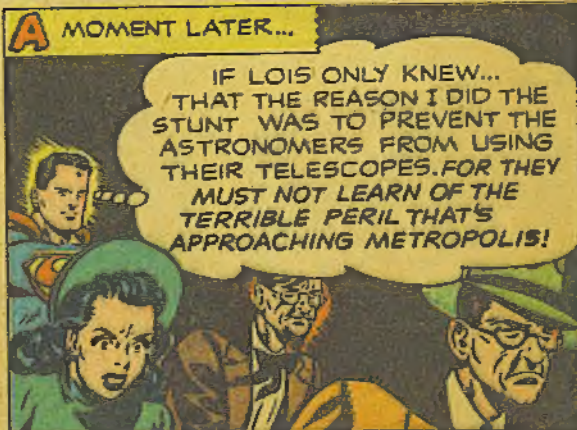
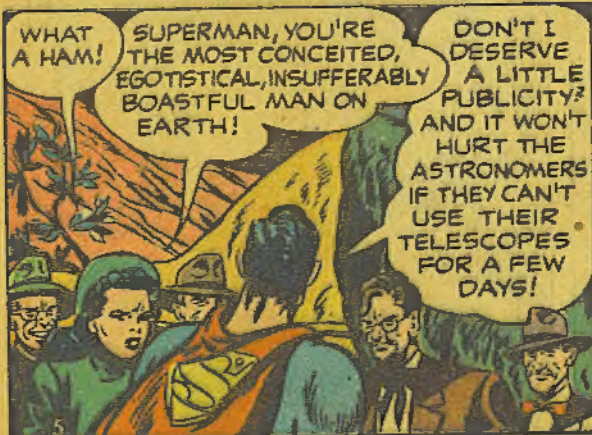
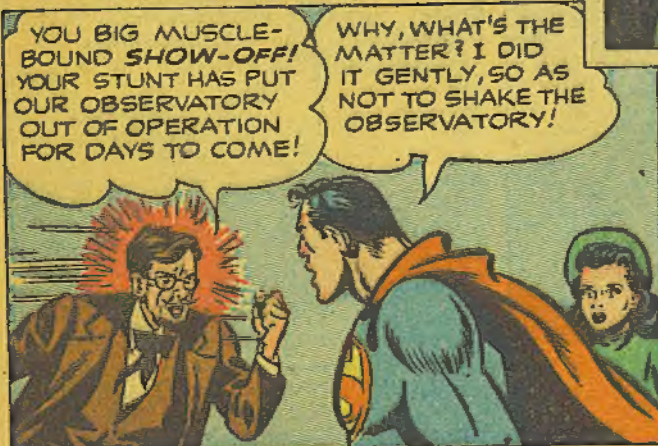
WELL, I SUPPOSE WE'LL HAVE TO COVER A STORY AS BIG AS THAT, EVEN IF YOU ARE DOING IT FOR PUBLICITY!

SOON, AT BALD PEAK, ATOP WHICH IS EASTERN ASTRONOMICAL OBSERVATORY...

SURE YOU'VE GOT YOUR CAMERAS SET UP?

YEAH, YEAH... (WHAT A GRANDSTANDER THIS GUY TURNED INTO.)

EXERTING HIS AMAZING STRENGTH, THE MAN OF STEEL PERFORMS A STARTLING FEAT!



I MUST PREPARE TO AVERT THAT PERIL! BUT I MUST CONTINUE DISGUIISING MY PREPARATIONS AS PUBLICITY STUNTS, OR PEOPLE WILL LEARN THE DANGER AND THERE'D BE WILD PANIC!

WHAT PERIL THREATENS METROPOLIS THAT IS SO GREAT EVEN SUPERMAN MUST MAKE GREAT EFFORTS TO PREPARE AGAINST IT?

NOW I'VE GOT TO CARRY OUT THE NEXT STEP OF MY PREPARATIONS...BUT I HAVE TO KEEP PEOPLE THINKING IT'S JUST ANOTHER SHOW-OFF STUNT ON MY PART!

SOON!

HERE ARE SOME GOOD PICTURES OF ME TO PRINT! I THINK THIS ONE SHOWS MY BEST PROFILE!

HERE COMES SUPER-HAM AGAIN, FOR MORE PUBLICITY!

AND TO THINK I ONCE THOUGHT HIM THE MOST MODEST MAN IN THE WORLD!

MY NEXT BIG STUNT WILL BE IN ECHO VALLEY, WHERE I'LL SHOW YOU MY GREATEST FEAT OF STRENGTH! BE SURE TO BE THERE TO WRITE IT UP!

IN ECHO VALLEY, MILES NORTH OF METROPOLIS, THE MAN OF STEEL BECOMES A STEELMAN!

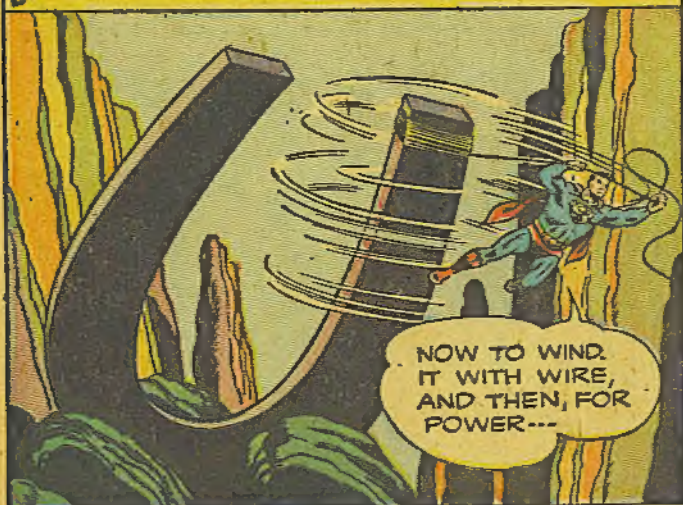
I CAN SQUEEZE THE IRON OUT OF THIS IRON ORE WITH THE HEAT OF PRESSURE FROM MY HANDS! IT WON'T TAKE LONG TO MAKE A HUGE IRON BAR!

THEN, SUPERMAN BENDS THE GREAT IRON BAR INTO A GIANT "U"...

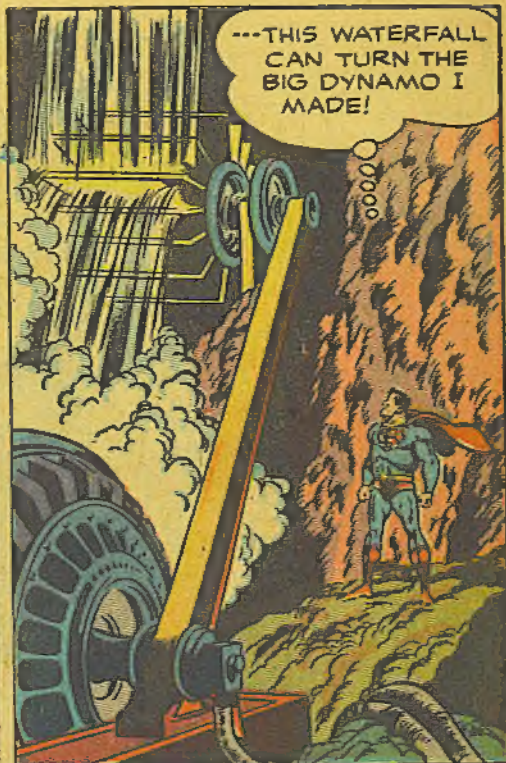
A GOOD LIMBERING-UP EXERCISE!



FORMING IT INTO A HUGE ELECTRO-MAGNET!



NOW TO WIND
IT WITH WIRE,
AND THEN, FOR
POWER---



---THIS WATERFALL
CAN TURN THE
BIG DYNAMO I
MADE!

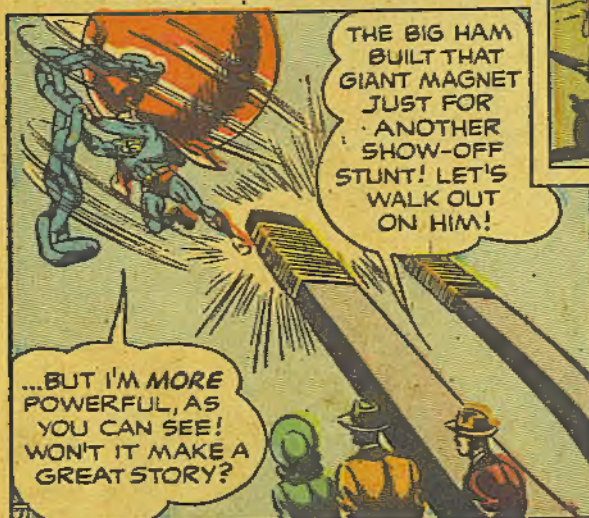
WHEN THE REPORTERS ARRIVE...

SUPERMAN, WHAT'S
THIS BIG FEAT OF
STRENGTH GOING
TO BE?

A TUG-OF-WAR!
BETWEEN ME
AND THE MIGHTIEST
MAGNET IN THE
WORLD!



THIS SUPER
ELECTRO-MAGNET
IS COLOSSALLY
POWERFUL...

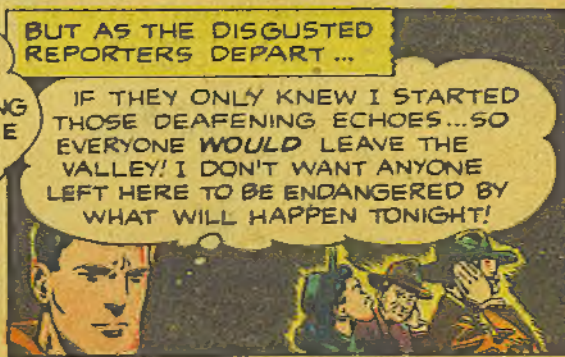


THE BIG HAM
BUILT THAT
GIANT MAGNET
JUST FOR
ANOTHER
SHOW-OFF
STUNT! LET'S
WALK OUT
ON HIM!

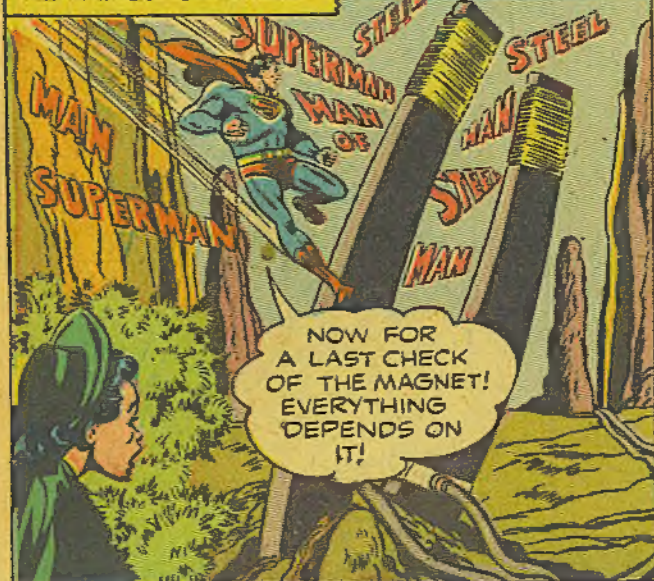
...BUT I'M MORE
POWERFUL, AS
YOU CAN SEE!
WON'T IT MAKE A
GREAT STORY?

SO MY STUNT WASN'T TERRIFIC
ENOUGH FOR YOU, EH? WAIT, I'LL
PERFORM AN EVEN BETTER ONE!
THIS VALLEY IS FAMOUS FOR
ITS ECHOES...





UNOBSERVED BY SUPERMAN, LOIS LANE HAS REMAINED BEHIND...



NOW FOR A LAST CHECK OF THE MAGNET! EVERYTHING DEPENDS ON IT!

HE HASN'T TURNED OFF THAT GIANT MAGNET! I WONDER IF HE BUILT IT FOR SOME OTHER PURPOSE THAN JUST SHOWING-OFF? BUT WHAT?

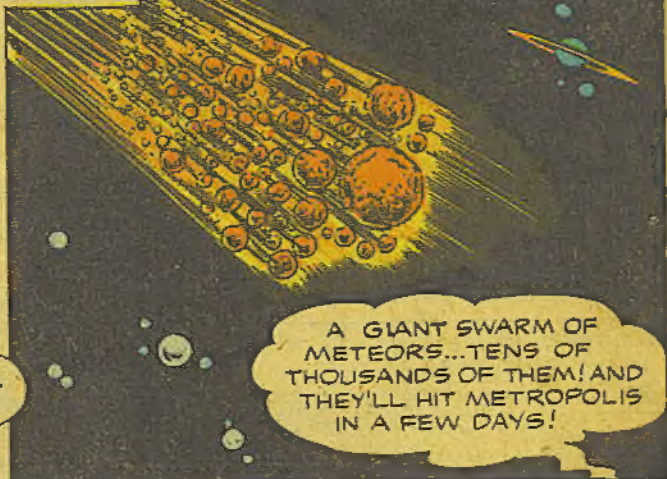


USING HIS SUPER-TELESCOPIC VISION... THIS IS WHAT THE MAN OF STEEL SAW...

YES, WHAT IS SUPERMAN'S PURPOSE... WHAT IS THE DANGER HE'S TRYING TO AVERT? FOR THE ANSWER, LET US GO BACK TO THE TIME JUST BEFORE HE STARTED "SHOWING-OFF" WHEN HE WAS STREAKING THROUGH THE STRATOSPHERE ON HIS RETURN FROM A MISSION...



SOMETHING UP THERE IN SPACE... RUSHING TOWARD EARTH!

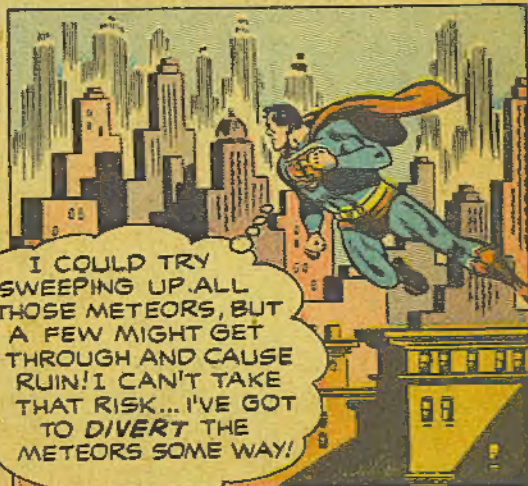


A GIANT SWARM OF METEORS...TENS OF THOUSANDS OF THEM! AND THEY'LL HIT METROPOLIS IN A FEW DAYS!

I CAN SEE WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THEY HIT...METROPOLIS WOULD BE DESTROYED!



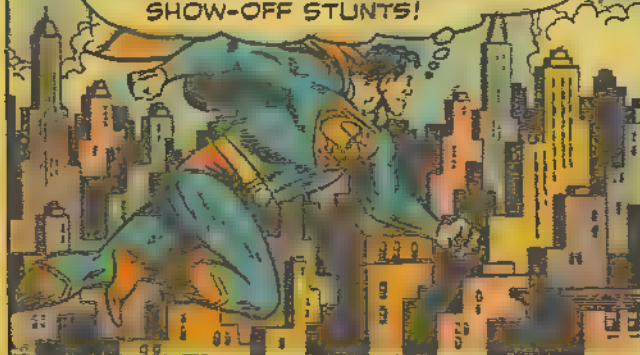
I COULD TRY SWEEPING UP ALL THOSE METEORS, BUT A FEW MIGHT GET THROUGH AND CAUSE RUIN! I CAN'T TAKE THAT RISK... I'VE GOT TO DIVERT THE METEORS SOME WAY!





THE THREATENING DANGER HAD TO BE CONCEALED FROM EVERYONE!

I CAN DIVERT THE METEORS... BUT IF PEOPLE LEARN OF THE DANGER FROM MY PREPARATIONS, THERE'LL BE PANIC! I'VE GOT TO DISGUISE MY PREPARATIONS AS SHOW-OFF STUNTS!



BUT THE CITY DOESN'T KNOW THE METEORS WILL BE DIVERTED! IF IT SEES THAT RAIN OF FIRE IN THE SKY, THERE'LL BE TERRIBLE PANIC!

TO PREVENT METROPOLIS FROM SEEING THE ONRUSHING METEORS, SUPERMAN "SHOWS-OFF" AGAIN!

YOU'VE SEEN AIRPLANES LAY A SMOKE-SCREEN OVER A BATTLESHIP... I'LL LAY A SMOKE-SCREEN OVER ALL METROPOLIS! WATCH THIS!

ANOTHER OF SUPERMAN'S GRANDSTAND STUNTS!



And NOW, WITH THE METEOR-DEATH ALREADY PLUNGING DOWN TOWARD AN UNSUSPECTING CITY...



THIS COLOSSAL MAGNET WILL ATTRACT THE METEORS, WHICH ARE ALWAYS MOSTLY IRON! IT'LL KEEP THEM FROM FALLING ON METROPOLIS!

USING A BORROWED BOILER FOR HIS SMOKE-PRODUCER, THE MAN OF STEEL CREATES A MAMMOTH CLOUD...



WHAT A SHOW-OFF!

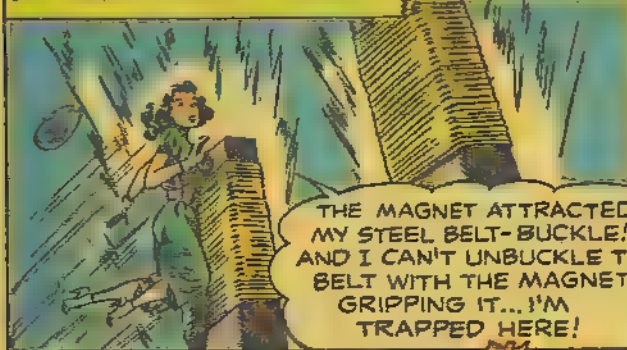
HE SURE HAS BECOME AN AWFUL HAM!

AW, SUPERMAN'S SMOKE-SCREEN HAS COVERED UP THE MOON!

AND THE SOOT WILL GET MY CURTAINS DIRTY... THE BIG SHOW-OFF!



BUT ONCE AGAIN LOIS LANE'S FEMININE CURIOSITY GETS HER INTO TROUBLE! FOR AS SHE NEARS THE GIANT MAGNET...



THE MAGNET ATTRACTED MY STEEL BELT-BUCKLE! AND I CAN'T UNBUCKLE THE BELT WITH THE MAGNET GRIPPING IT... I'M TRAPPED HERE!

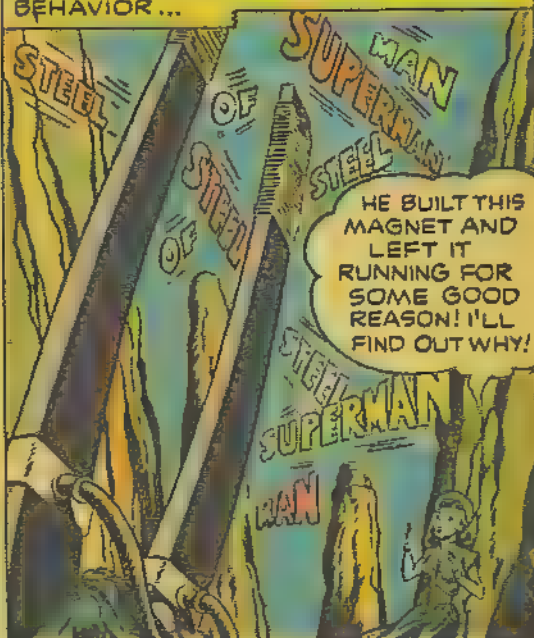
At THAT MOMENT, IN METROPOLIS...

NO, WE'RE NOT GOING TO WRITE UP THIS FOOL SMOKE-SCREEN STUNT! HALF MY REPORTERS ARE NOT HERE ANYWAY... CLARK KENT'S STILL GONE, AND LOIS IS STILL UP IN ECHO VALLEY!

LOIS STILL THERE? BUT THE METEORS WILL FALL ON MY MAGNET THERE, IN FIVE SECONDS!



MEANWHILE, IN ECHO VALLEY, MAKING A FINAL ATTEMPT TO SOLVE THE MYSTERY OF SUPERMAN'S SHOW-OFF BEHAVIOR ...

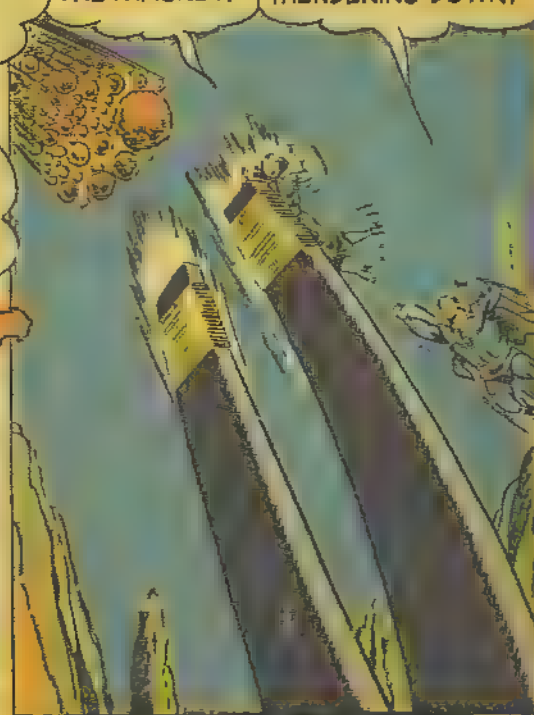


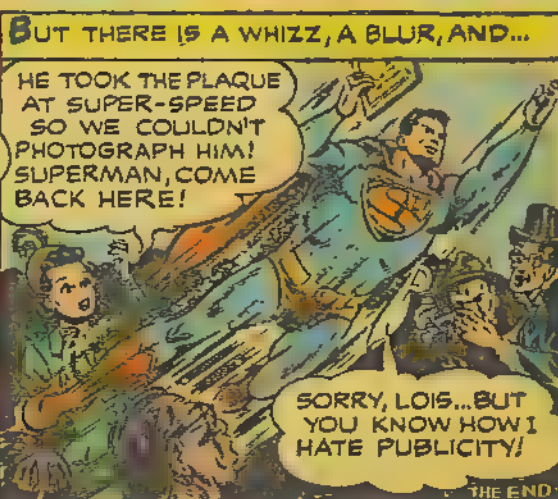
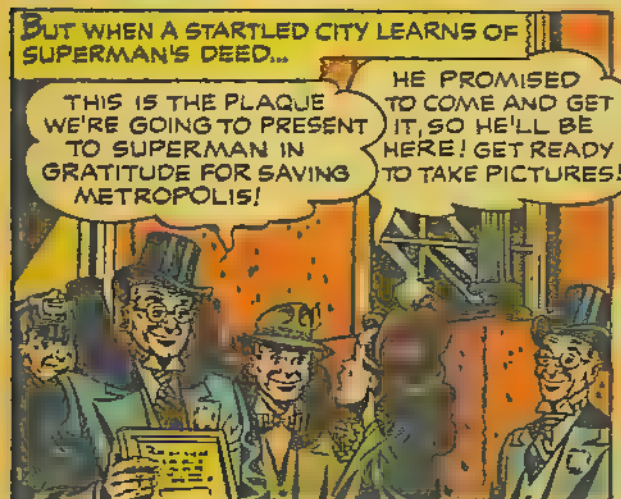
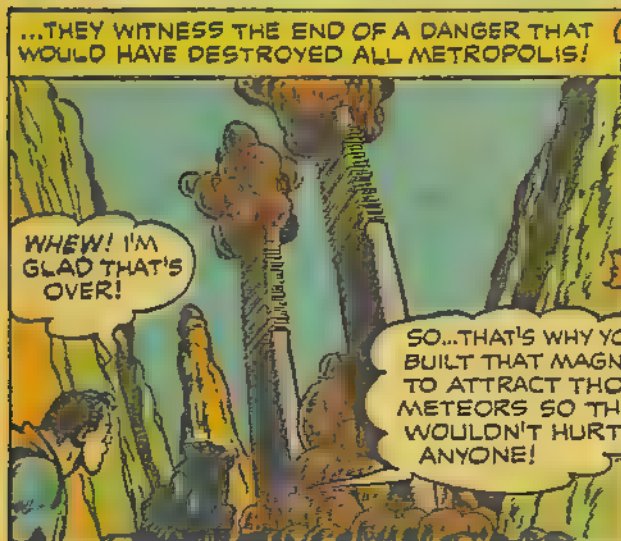
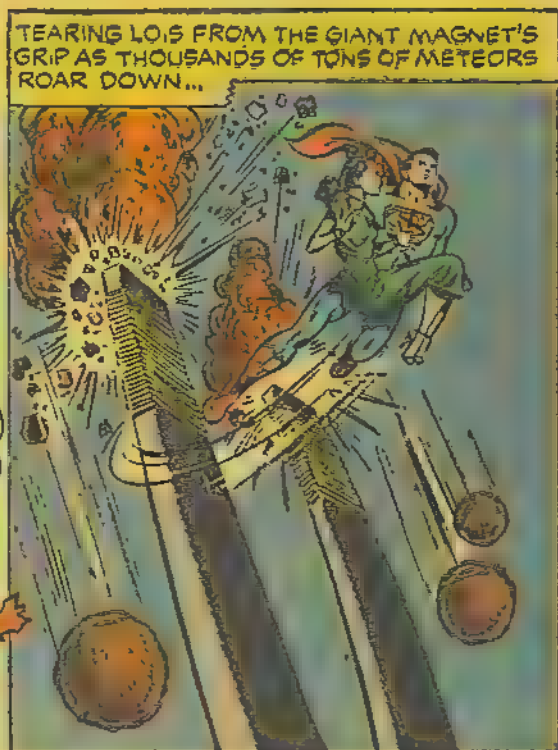
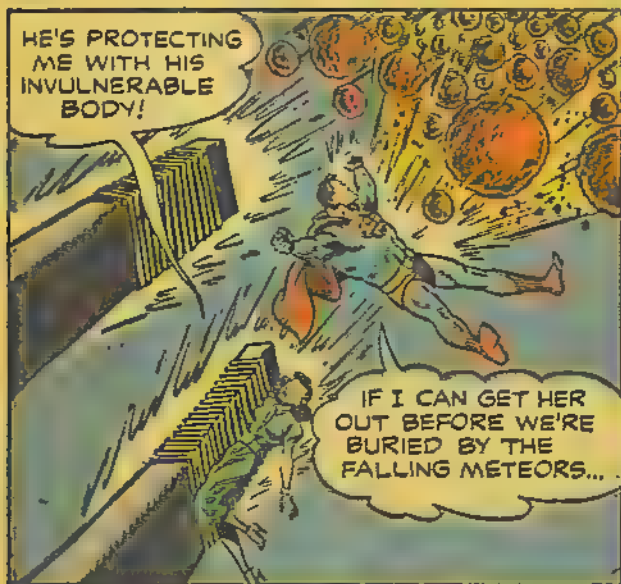
HE BUILT THIS MAGNET AND LEFT IT RUNNING FOR SOME GOOD REASON! I'LL FIND OUT WHY!

IN LESS THAN ONE SECOND, THE MAN OF STEEL WHIZZES ACROSS THE MILES TO ECHO VALLEY!

SUPERMAN, I'M CAUGHT BY THE MAGNET!

AND THE METEORS, ATTRACTED BY THE MAGNET, ARE THUNDERING DOWN!







EARTH'S HISTORY RECORDS THAT IN ANCIENT TIMES THERE WERE SEVEN WONDERS OF THE WORLD, SUCH AS THE PYRAMIDS OF EGYPT, THE HANGING GARDENS OF BABYLON, AND THE COLOSSUS OF RHODES! BUT IN 1989, AS MANKIND SOARS TO OTHER WORLDS, GREATER WONDERS LIE IN SPACE! AND COLONEL TOMMY TOMORROW SEEKS THEM OUT, ONE BY ONE... WITH HIS VERY CAREER AS A PLANETEER AT STAKE! THE MAN OF THE FUTURE PROVES HIMSELF AN EIGHTH WONDER AS HE BRINGS TO LIGHT...

The
SEVEN WONDERS
of SPACE!

COLONEL TOMMY TOMORROW OF THE PLANETEERS CRUISES THROUGH SPACE ON A ROUTINE MISSION...

ALL CLEAR
IN SPACE
AHEAD!



BUT WITHOUT WARNING, DISASTER STRIKES!

SHIP CRACKING
OPEN! MAN THE
LIFE ROCKETS!



OBEYING ORDERS, THE TRAINED CREW SWIFTLY ESCAPES THE WRECKED SHIP IN ITS LIFE ROCKETS...

WE ALL GOT AWAY! RESCUE SHIPS WILL PICK US UP!

BUT TOMMY TOMORROW KNOWS THE BITTER HUMILIATION OF LOSING A GALLANT SHIP...

I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT! I SAW NOTHING...WE HIT NOTHING...YET THE SHIP CRACKED UP!

IT'S A MYSTERY, SIR! BUT I'M AFRAID IT'S GOING TO GO HARD WITH YOU WHEN THIS IS REPORTED!

LATER, AT THE INVESTIGATION OF THE MISHAP...

YOU OFFER NO LOGICAL EXPLANATION OF WHY YOUR SHIP WAS WRECKED, COLONEL TOMORROW! WE CAN ONLY PUT IT DOWN TO GROSS NEGLIGENCE ON YOUR PART, AS COMMANDER! AND YOU KNOW THE PENALTY FOR THAT, IN THE PLANETEER CODE...

...DISHONORABLE DISCHARGE FROM THE PLANETEERS! TAKE OFF THAT UNIFORM WHICH YOU HAVE DISGRACED! HERE-AFTER, YOU ARE PLAIN TOMMY TOMORROW... PRIVATE CITIZEN!!

BUT SIR... I... CHOKES!

IN THE BLEAK DAYS THAT FOLLOW, A FORLORN FIGURE HAUNTS SPACE PORT, WATCHING THE PLANETEER SHIPS BLAST INTO SPACE TOWARD ADVENTURE AND GLORY WHICH HE IS DENIED!

TOMMY TOMORROW, PRIVATE CITIZEN...THAT'S ME NOW! WELL, I GUESS I'D BETTER LOOK FOR ANOTHER JOB!

YOU AND ME BOTH, BROTHER!



I'M LON BRETT, OF THE INTERPLANETARY NEWS! THE BOSS FIRED ME WHEN I REFUSED AN ASSIGNMENT! HE SAID TO GO OUT AND FIND SEVEN WONDERS OF SPACE!! THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!

WAIT! NO IT ISN'T!



WHAT IF I CAN LEAD YOU TO SEVEN WONDERS? WOULD THERE BE A JOB IN IT FOR ME?

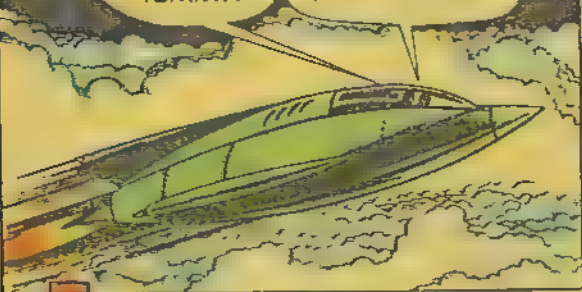
THERE SURE WOULD! I'D SEE TO THAT!

CHARTERING A SMALL TWO-MAN ROCKETSHIP, EX-PLANETEER TOMMY TOMORROW AND HIS NEWFOUND FRIEND SOAR INTO SPACE ON THEIR STRANGE MISSION...

BUT WHERE DO WE FIND THESE SEVEN WONDERS, TOMMY?

TRUST ME, BRETT! DON'T FORGET I WAS ALL OVER THE SOLAR SYSTEM AS A PLANETEER!

FAR OUT IN SPACE, AN AMAZING PHENOMENON OF A WORLD THAT HAS BEEN STEADILY BURNING FOR AGES...

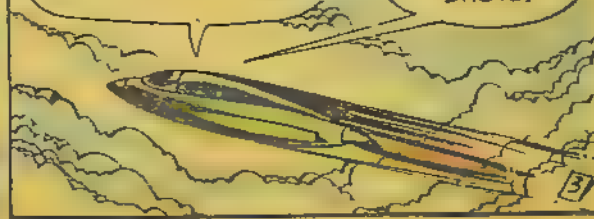


I KNOW OF SIX WONDERS OF SPACE FOR SURE! HERE THEY ARE...THE SARGASSO SEA...THE BURNING WORLD...THE FLYING DUTCHMAN...SPACE CITY...THE VEGETABLE WORLD...AND THE SPACE ROC! THE SEVENTH WILL HAVE TO WAIT TILL AFTER WE GET 'ROUND TO THEM! FIRST, WE HEAD FOR THE BURNING WORLD!



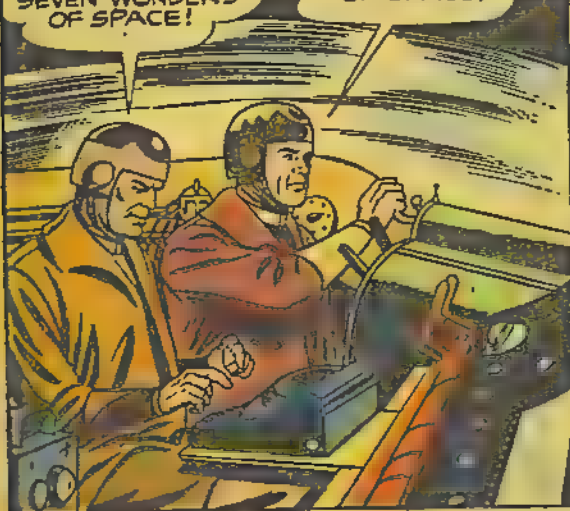
THE BURNING WORLD!! IT'S ENTIRELY COMPOSED OF INFLAMMABLE MATERIALS SUCH AS COAL, OIL, AND PITCH! YET IT'S SO HUGE THAT IT WILL CONTINUE TO BURN LIKE THAT FOR CENTURIES MORE!

WOW! WHAT A SIGHT! I'M GETTING MAGNIFICENT COLOR CAMERA SHOTS!

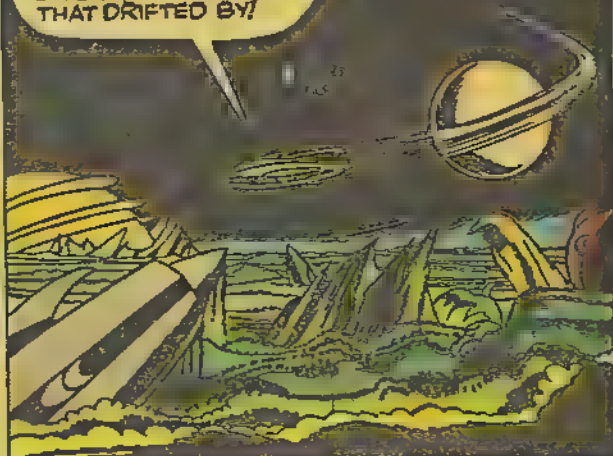


GREAT, TOMMY!
THAT'S CERTAINLY
ONE OF THE
SEVEN WONDERS
OF SPACE!

YOU HAVEN'T SEEN
ANYTHING YET! NEXT,
THE SARGASSO SEA
OF SPACE!

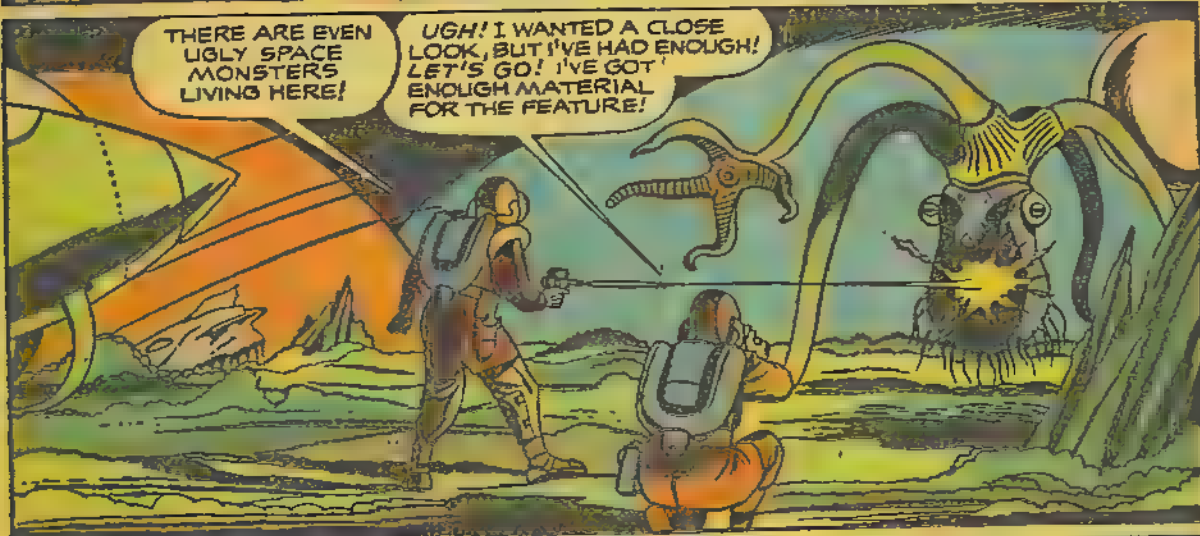


THERE IT IS!
LIKE THE SARGASSO
SEA OF EARTH, IT'S A
VAST MASS OF SPACE
SEAWEED WHICH HAS
CAUGHT UP ANYTHING
THAT DRIFTED BY!



THERE ARE EVEN
UGLY SPACE
MONSTERS
LIVING HERE!

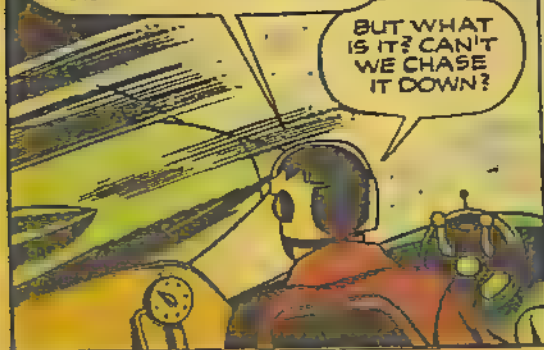
UGH! I WANTED A CLOSE
LOOK, BUT I'VE HAD ENOUGH!
LET'S GO! I'VE GOT
ENOUGH MATERIAL
FOR THE FEATURE!



LATER, AS THEY SEEK AND FIND THE
THIRD WONDER OF SPACE...

THE FLYING DUTCHMAN! LIKE THE
EARTH LEGEND, THAT GHOSTLY ROCKET
SHIP ETERNALLY HAUNTS THIS AREA
OF SPACE, AS IF "CURSED"
AND UNABLE TO LAND!

BUT WHAT
IS IT? CAN'T
WE CHASE
IT DOWN?

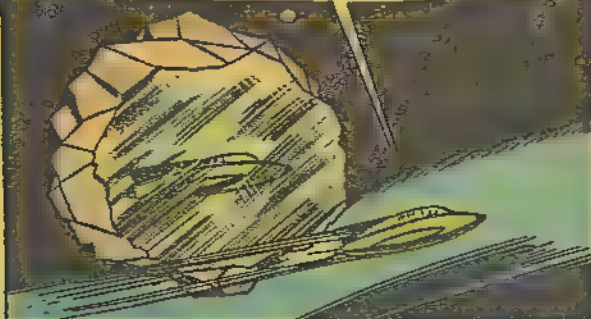


NO! THE FASTER WE
GO... THE FASTER IT
GOES! IT'S LIKE TRYING
TO CATCH YOUR OWN
SHADOW OR IMAGE!
BUT WAIT... NOW I
KNOW THE ANSWER!



BY CLEVER DEDUCTION, TOMMY TOMORROW SOLVES THE MYSTERY OF THE GHOST SHIP!

LOOK, BRETT... THAT DRIFTING METEOR IS MADE OF GLASS! ONE SIDE IS SMOOTH LIKE A MIRROR! AND LIKE A MIRROR, IT SIMPLY REFLECTS ANY PASSING SHIP! IN OTHER WORDS, THE GHOST SHIP IS OUR OWN DISTORTED IMAGE!



EVEN THOUGH THE EXPLANATION IS SIMPLE, THAT'S STILL ONE OF THE SEVEN WONDERS OF SPACE! BOY, THIS FEATURE IS SHAPING UP GREAT!

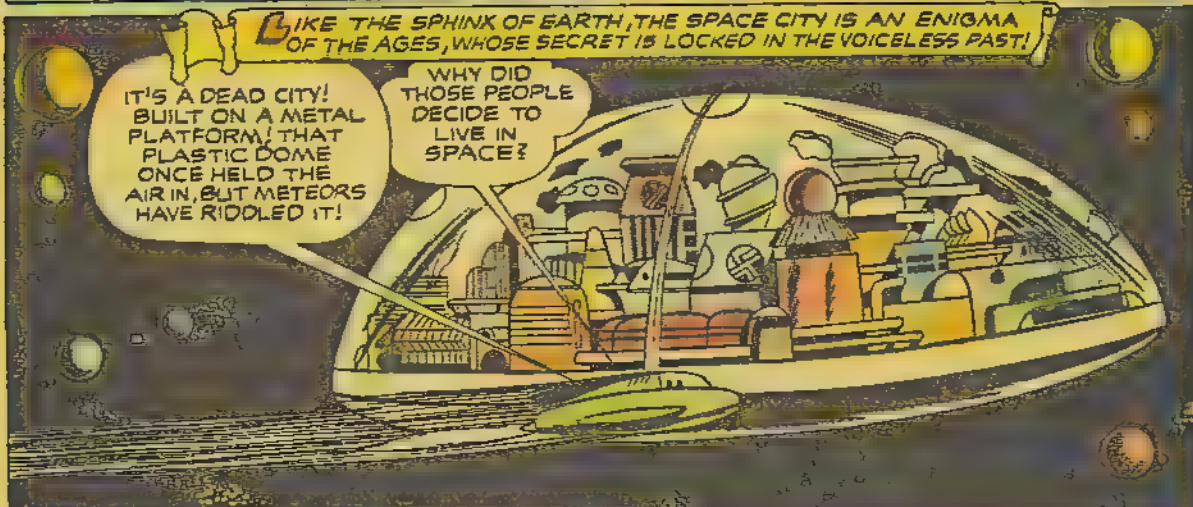
NOW FOR NUMBER FOUR... THE SPACE CITY!



LIKE THE SPHINK OF EARTH, THE SPACE CITY IS AN ENIGMA OF THE AGES, WHOSE SECRET IS LOCKED IN THE VOICELESS PAST!

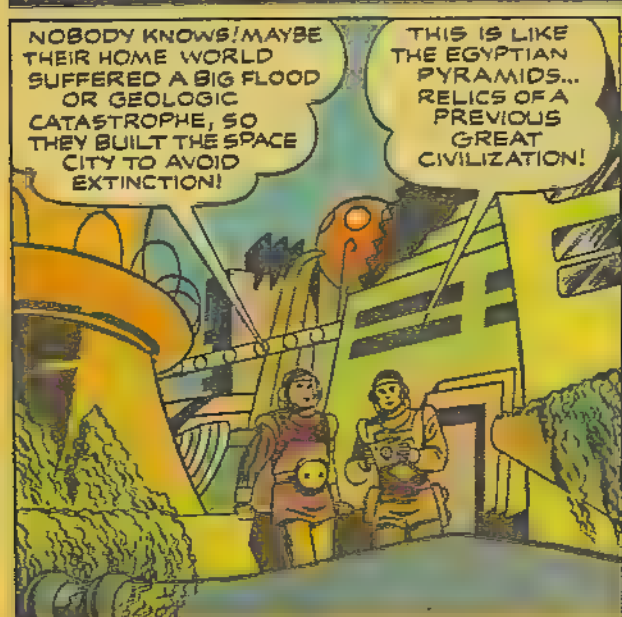
IT'S A DEAD CITY! BUILT ON A METAL PLATFORM! THAT PLASTIC DOME ONCE HELD THE AIR IN, BUT METEORS HAVE RIDDLED IT!

WHY DID THOSE PEOPLE DECIDE TO LIVE IN SPACE?



NOBODY KNOWS! MAYBE THEIR HOME WORLD SUFFERED A BIG FLOOD OR GEOLOGIC CATASTROPHE, SO THEY BUILT THE SPACE CITY TO AVOID EXTINCTION!

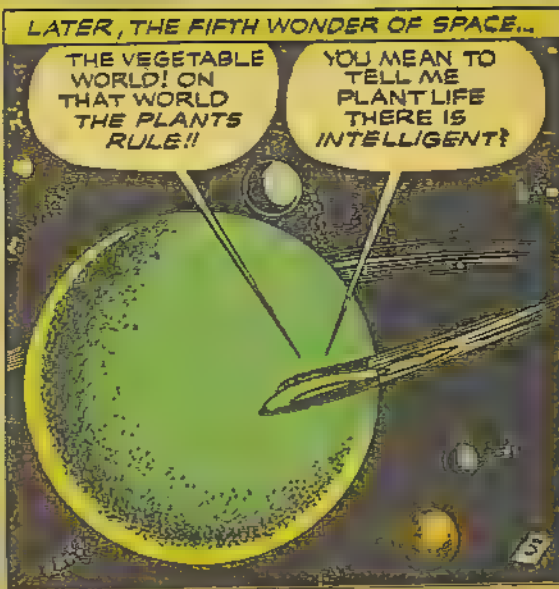
THIS IS LIKE THE EGYPTIAN PYRAMIDS... RELICS OF A PREVIOUS GREAT CIVILIZATION!



LATER, THE FIFTH WONDER OF SPACE...

THE VEGETABLE WORLD! ON THAT WORLD THE PLANTS RULE!!

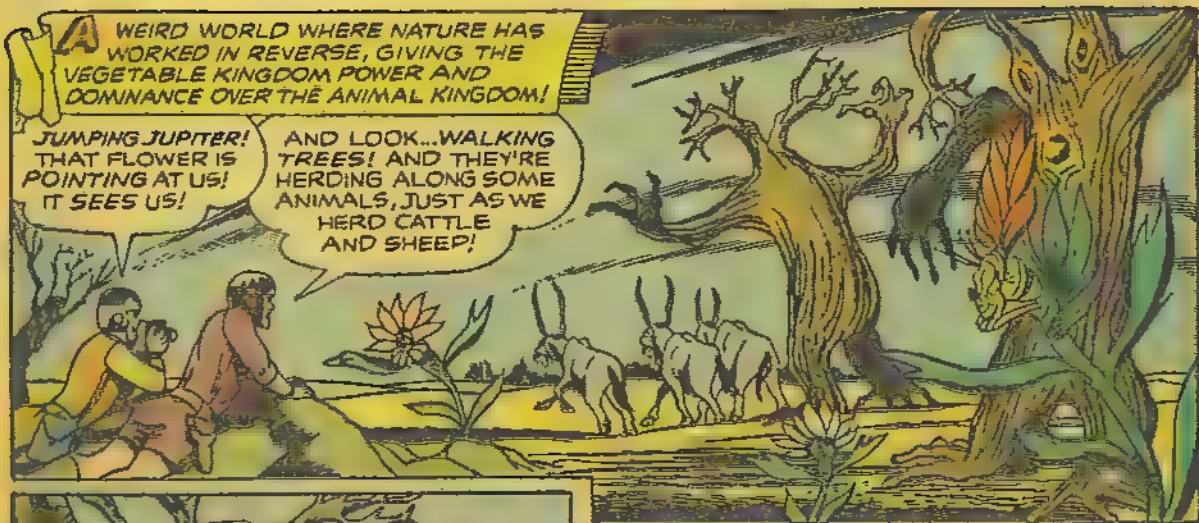
YOU MEAN TO TELL ME PLANT LIFE THERE IS INTELLIGENT?



A WEIRD WORLD WHERE NATURE HAS WORKED IN REVERSE, GIVING THE VEGETABLE KINGDOM POWER AND DOMINANCE OVER THE ANIMAL KINGDOM!

JUMPING JUPITER! THAT FLOWER IS POINTING AT US! IT SEES US!

AND LOOK...WALKING TREES! AND THEY'RE HERDING ALONG SOME ANIMALS, JUST AS WE HERD CATTLE AND SHEEP!

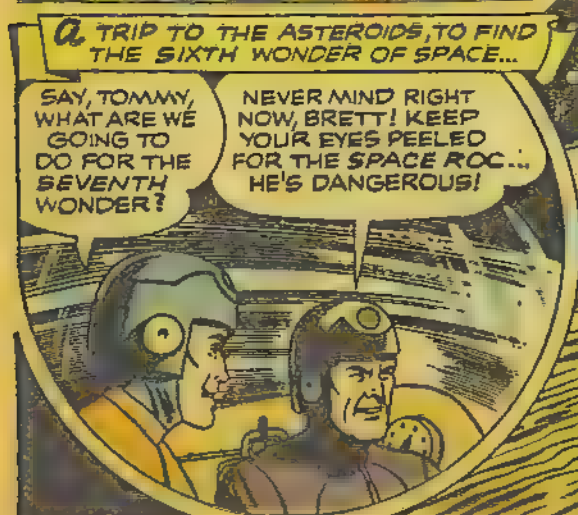


YAPE! ONE WALKING TREE IS COMING FOR US...WANTS TO CAPTURE US!

RUN FOR THE SHIP, BRETT!



SORRY! WE DON'T INTEND STAYING ON THIS WORLD AS YOUR SLAVES OR PETS!



A TRIP TO THE ASTEROIDS, TO FIND THE SIXTH WONDER OF SPACE...

SAY, TOMMY, WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO FOR THE SEVENTH WONDER?

NEVER MIND RIGHT NOW, BRETT! KEEP YOUR EYES PEELED FOR THE SPACE ROC... HE'S DANGEROUS!



WAIT! WHAT'S THAT GIANT SHADOW?

LIKE THE FABLED ROC, A GIGANTIC SPACE-BIRD OF PREY DESCENDS TO GOBBLE UP A TASTY MORSEL!

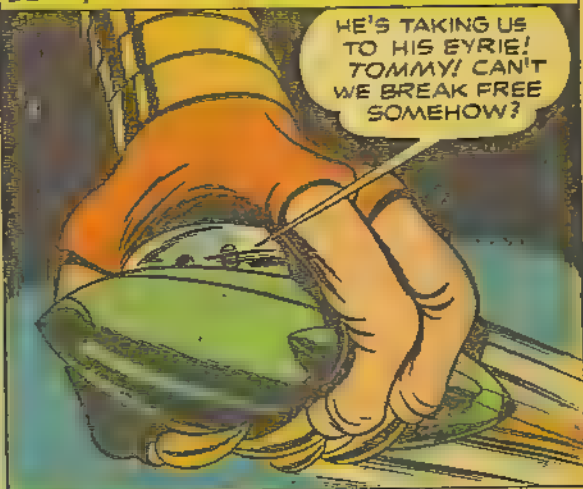


IT'S THE SPACE ROC! GIVE HIM A RAY-CHARGE WHILE I PUT ON FULL SPEED AWAY!

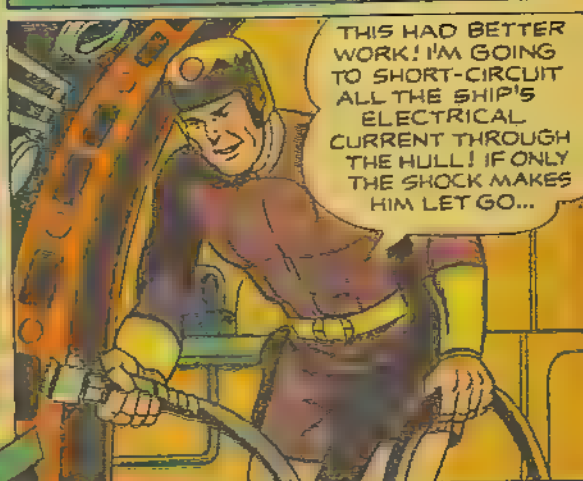


IT WORKED! AS FOR HOW THAT BIRD CAN FLY IN AIRLESS SPACE... HE CAN'T! THERE'S ONLY ENOUGH AIR AROUND THE ASTEROIDS HERE, TO ALLOW HIM TO FLAP AND USE HIS WINGS! HE CAN'T GO VISITING EARTH OR OTHER WORLDS... THANK THE STARS!

BUT THOUGH THEY ESCAPE THE FEROCIOUS BEAK, MIGHTY TALONS REACH OUT AND...



HE'S TAKING US TO HIS EYRIE! TOMMY! CAN'T WE BREAK FREE SOMEHOW?



THIS HAD BETTER WORK! I'M GOING TO SHORT-CIRCUIT ALL THE SHIP'S ELECTRICAL CURRENT THROUGH THE HULL! IF ONLY THE SHOCK MAKES HIM LET GO...

BUT NOW TOMMY TOMORROW HAS REACHED THE END OF HIS LIST...

I'VE RUN OUT OF WONDERS, BRETT!

SO NEAR AND YET SO FAR! WE'VE GOT TO HAVE SEVEN WONDERS! SIX WON'T DO, NOT WITH THE BOSS OF INTERPLANETARY NEWS!



I'LL HAVE TO FAKE IT! SUPPOSE I SAY THE SEVENTH WONDER IS AN INVISIBLE WORLD? NOBODY CAN PROVE ME WRONG!

WAIT! BRETT, YOU'VE HIT IT! WE'RE GOING TO THE SPOT WHERE MY SHIP CRACKED UP!

HERE'S THE SPOT! AND MY SHIP CRACKED UP BECAUSE IT HIT AN INVISIBLE WORLD! WHY DIDN'T I THINK OF THAT SOONER?

INVISIBLE WORLD? BUT HOW CAN WE PROVE IT, WITHOUT SEEING IT?

WE CAN SEE IT... BY ULTRA-VIOLET LIGHT! I RIGGED UP THIS RADARSCOPE! THERE IT IS... THE INVISIBLE WORLD!

THE SEVENTH WONDER OF SPACE!

BACK ON EARTH LATER...

I GOT MY JOB BACK... AT DOUBLE SALARY! THE BOSS ALMOST POLISHED MY SHOES FOR ME WHEN I BROUGHT IT IN!

INTERPLANETARY NEWS
THE SEVEN WONDERS OF SPACE!
BY LON BRETT

AS FOR TOMMY TOMORROW, EX-PRIVATE CITIZEN...

WE WITHDRAW THE CHARGE OF NEGLIGENCE AGAINST YOU! HEREAFTER, ALL SHIPS WILL BE WARNED TO AVOID THE INVISIBLE WORLD! WE TAKE PRIDE IN REINSTATING YOU FULLY INTO THE PLANETEERS... COLONEL TOMMY TOMORROW!

SIR! I... I... GULP! THANKS!

THERE GOES THE EIGHTH WONDER OF SPACE... COLONEL TOMMY TOMORROW OF THE PLANETEERS!!

THE END.

CONGO BILL

WHEN IS A VACATION NOT A VACATION? ACCORDING TO CONGO BILL, WHENEVER HE'S SUPPOSED TO HAVE ONE! FOR *WORLD WIDE'S* TROUBLE-SHOOTER FINDS THAT A GHOSTLY HIGHWAYMAN AND A LOST TREASURE ADD UP TO DEPRIVE HIM OF A NEEDED REST, AND LEAD TO A TOTALLY UNEXPECTED AND NERVE-CHILLING NIGHT IN...

"THE HIGHWAYMAN'S CASTLE!"



"PISTOL JACK ROAMED THE ENGLISH HIGHWAYS DURING THE EARLY PART OF THE 18TH CENTURY. ON HIS COAL-BLACK HORSE, HE WAS A SIGHT TO PUT FEAR INTO THE HEARTS OF COACH-LINE DRIVERS..."

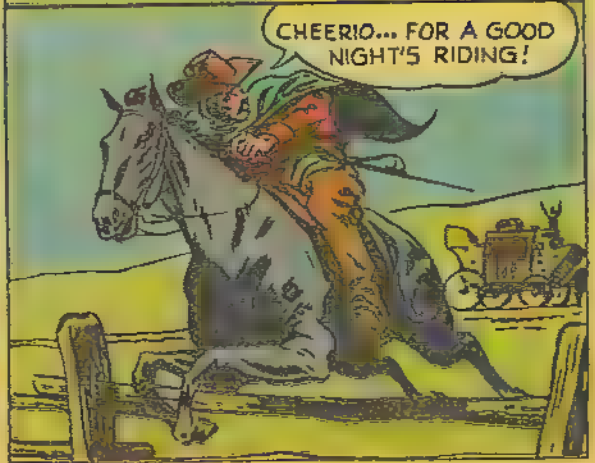
STAND AND DELIVER, SIRRAH!

DON'T EEE SHOOT, NOW! I BE A-STOPPIN' MY HORSES!



"THE THUNDER OF HIS STALLION'S HOOVES RANG LOUD IN THE MIDNIGHT AIR AS HE HURRIED HOME WITH HIS LOOT..."

CHEERIO... FOR A GOOD NIGHT'S RIDING!



"HE HID HIS LOOT CAREFULLY, WITHIN A ROUND STONE CHAMBER BENEATH BORDER CASTLE..."

NOW TO HIDE MY LOOT—AND BECOME MY RESPECTABLE SELF ONCE AGAIN...



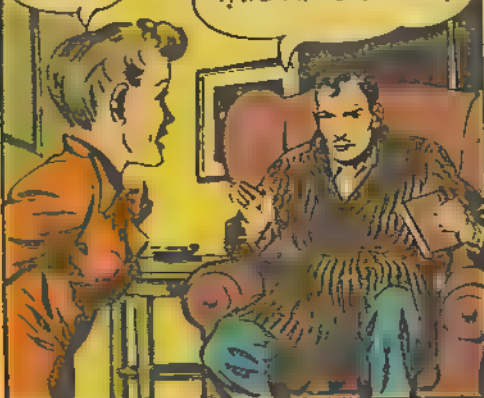
AND TWO HUNDRED YEARS LATER, IN A HOTEL JUST OFF PICCADILLY CIRCUS, CONGO BILL PICKS UP A BOOK...

HMMM... 'LIVES OF NOTORIOUS HIGHWAYMEN'... FIRST CHAPTER ON *PISTOL JACK* — GUESS I'LL SETTLE MYSELF FOR AN EVENING'S READING. HUH? SOMEONE'S AT THE DOOR!



HELLO, BILL! I'VE GOT NEWS FOR YOU!

LISTEN, BAD NEWS HALEY, I'M ON VACATION. YOU SAID SO YOURSELF THIS AFTERNOON!



LISTEN, ANYWAY! MR. BURTON, PRESIDENT OF *WORLD WIDE INSURANCE COMPANY* OF LONDON GOT INVOLVED IN AN ARGUMENT ABOUT GHOSTS AT HIS CLUB. THE RESULT IS, HE OKAYED A POLICY FOR A HUNDRED THOUSAND POUNDS, GUARANTEEING BORDER CASTLE AGAINST BEING *HAUNTED!*

CAN I HELP IT IF BURTON IS IMPULSIVE?



AND CAN I HELP IT IF BURTON'S ORDERS ARE FOR YOU AND ME TO GO TO BORDER CASTLE?

AW, BAD NEWS, HAVE A HEART! I'M ON VACATION.



THREE HOURS LATER...

HERE WE ARE, CONGO BILL, BORDER CASTLE!

I COULD HAVE READ ABOUT IT IN THE COMFORT OF MY ROOM!





LET'S SEE IF I'VE GOT THINGS STRAIGHT—LADY WENDOVER OWNS THE CASTLE, LORD BRIARLY IS HER LAWYER. SHE DOESN'T WANT TO SELL, BUT SHE NEEDS THE MONEY, AND BRIARLY HAS FOUND AN AMERICAN BUYER.

AND THE RICH AMERICAN WOULDN'T BUY UNLESS HE GOT A WORLD WIDE POLICY GUARANTEEING HIM AGAINST GHOSTS, SEE?

MOMENTS LATER, AFTER INTRODUCTIONS...

OF COURSE YOU UNDERSTAND, OLD BOY—NO SUCH THINGS AS GHOSTS, BUT I THOUGHT I'D ASK YOU DOWN ANYWAY.

YOU DID RIGHT, MR. BURTON. I SUSPECT A FRAUDULENT SCHEME TO COLLECT INSURANCE.

NATURALLY, I DON'T WANT TO SELL THIS MAGNIFICENT PLACE, CONGO BILL, BUT I DO NEED MONEY. I WAS HOPING TO FIND PISTOL JACK'S TREASURE, BUT I'M AFRAID THAT'S A LOST CAUSE.

AS HER LAWYER, I FEEL SORRY FOR JANE, BUT JOHNNY EDWARDS, HERE, REALLY WANTS TO BUY. IF ONLY WE DON'T SEE THAT GHOST,

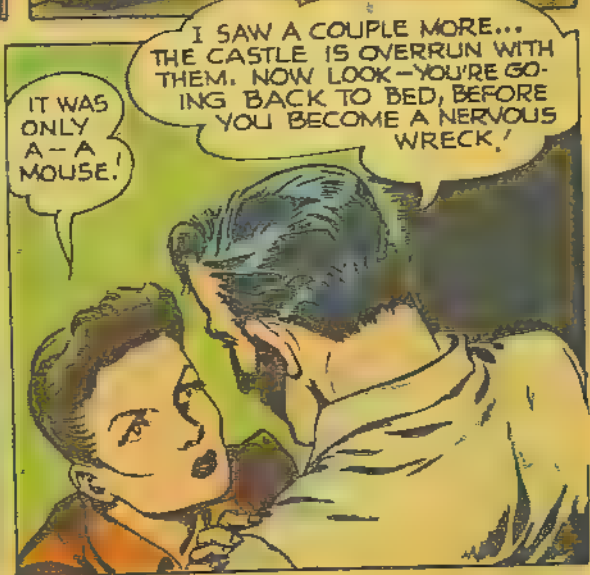
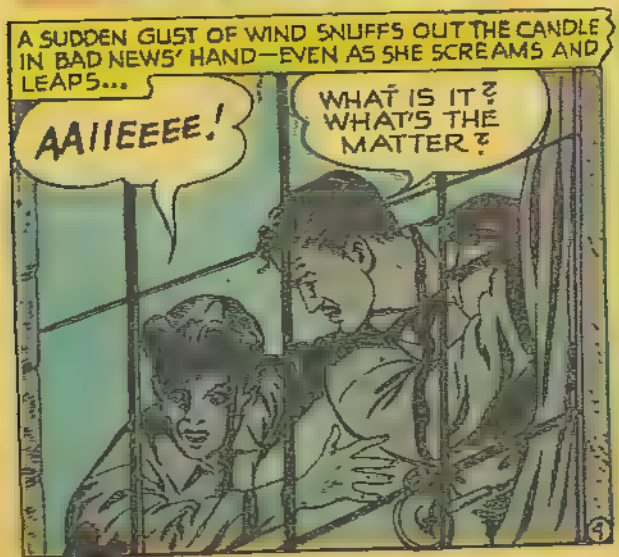
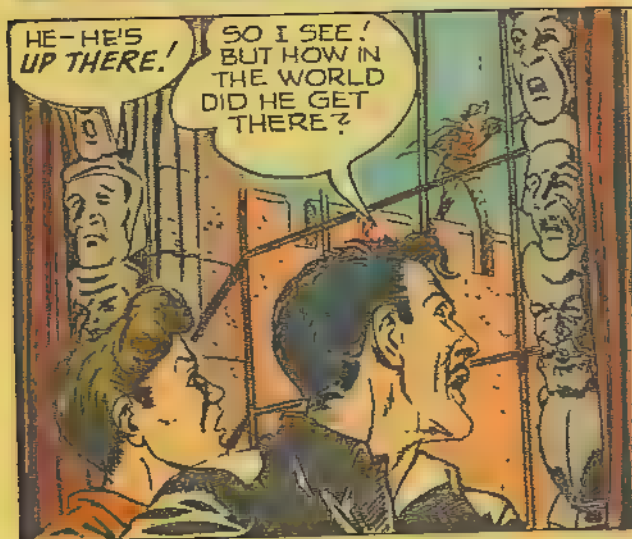
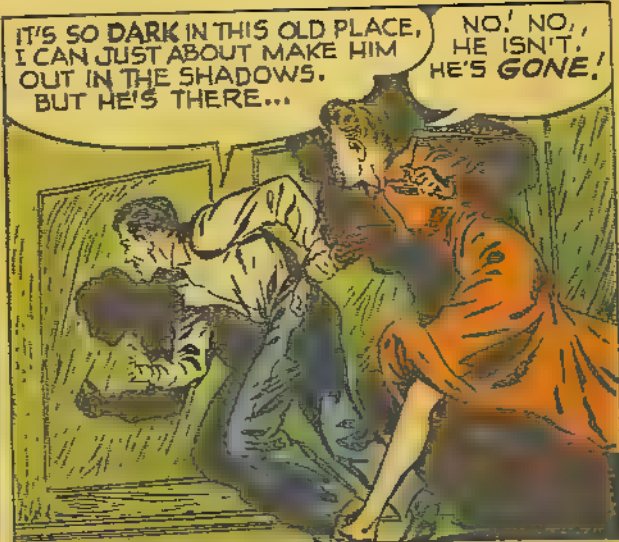
I UNDERSTAND, LORD BRIARLY, THAT THREE REPUTABLE PEOPLE MUST SEE THE GHOST BEFORE THE CASTLE IS ADMITTED TO BE HAUNTED.

I HOPE NO ONE EVER SEES THAT GHOST.

SOMETIME AFTER MIDNIGHT, AS CONGO BILL SETTLES DOWN FOR ANOTHER TRY AT READING ABOUT PISTOL JACK...

I KNEW IT WAS TOO GOOD TO LAST. HERE WE GO.

AAIEEEEE!



AN HOUR LATER, WHEN THE CASTLE IS ONCE MORE STILL...

THE DRAFT THAT BLEW OUT THAT CANDLE CAME FROM THIS WALL, WHERE THERE IS NO WINDOW. THAT MEANS THAT A HOLLOW TUBE EXISTS SOMEWHERE INSIDE THE WALL.



HERE IT IS! I'LL LOWER MY POCKET ALARM DOWN ON THIS TWINE. PERHAPS WHEN I HEAR THE WATCH TICKING, I'LL KNOW WHERE THIS TUBE LEADS!



MINUTES LATER, DOWN IN THE SUBTERRANEAN FOUNDATIONS OF THE CASTLE...

THE WATCH WENT DOWN OVER SIXTY FEET. THAT WOULD BRING IT A LITTLE BELOW THIS FLOOR, BUT SINCE THIS IS THE CELLAR FLOOR, THAT SEEMS WRONG—BUT—WHAT'S THIS?



A TRAP DOOR—LEADING TO A ROUND STONE CHAMBER! SAY! THAT LOOKS LIKE PISTOL JACK'S HIDEOUT AS DESCRIBED IN THAT BOOK I'VE BEEN TRYING TO READ—

CONGRATULATIONS, CONGO BILL. I'VE HEARD TALES OF YOUR CLEVERNESS. YOUR DISCOVERING THIS OLD HIGHWAYMAN'S HIDEOUT PROVES THEIR TRUTH!

STOP CHEWING THE RAG. HOW ARE WE GOING TO GET RID OF HIM?

WE AREN'T GOING TO MURDER HIM IN COLD BLOOD! I DON'T SCRUPLE AT MAKING DISHONEST MONEY, BUT CONGO BILL HAS TO BE GIVEN SOME CHANCE TO SAVE HIMSELF! CONGO BILL, I'M GOING TO GIVE YOU ONE CHANCE IN TEN TO GET OUT OF THIS ALIVE!



MOMENTS LATER... IN THE SECRET CHAMBER...

ONE OF THOSE TEN GLASSES CONTAINS UNPOISONED WINE. ALL THE OTHERS ARE POISONED. YOU WILL SELECT ONE AND DRINK IT DOWN TOMORROW MORNING. DO THAT—AND I SWEAR YOU WILL WALK OUT A FREE MAN!



AS THE TRAP DOOR CLANGS SHUT ABOVE HIM, COLD SWEAT BREAKS OUT ON CONGO BILL'S FOREHEAD...

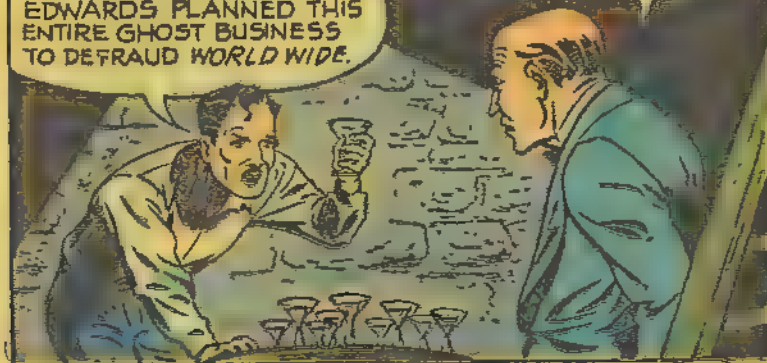
TEN GLASSES OF WINE. NINE POISONED! HOW CAN I TELL WHICH IS THE UNPOISONED WINE?



IN THE MORNING, A SMILING CONGO BILL GREETED LORD BRIARLEY...

THIS IS THE UNPOISONED WINE, LORD BRIARLEY. IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE IT, I'LL DRINK IT AND PROVE IT! JUST AS I'LL PROVE YOU AND EDWARDS PLANNED THIS ENTIRE GHOST BUSINESS TO DEFRAUD WORLD WIDE.

I TOOK A CHANCE AND LOST! BUT HOW IN THE WORLD DID YOU LEARN WHICH WINE WAS THE SAFE ONE?



LATER... LORD BRIARLEY AND EDWARDS WERE IN CAHOOTS! BRIARLEY INTENDED TO PRODUCE A GHOST WITH HIS ACCOMPLICE EDWARDS' HELP. HE MIGHT HAVE GOTTEN AWAY WITH IT, BUT HE BALKED AT MURDER!



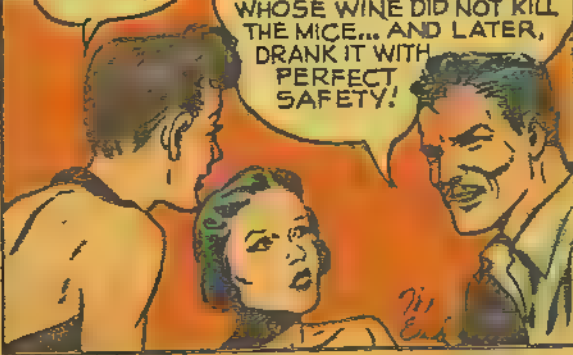
SO HE GAVE ME A SLIM CHANCE AT MY LIFE. AND WHILE I WAS PUZZLING OVER WHICH GLASS HELD THE UNPOISONED WINE, MY POCKET ALARM WENT OFF. IT WAS BEHIND A FALSE STONE IN THE HIGHWAYMAN'S CHAMBER, IN THE HOLLOW TUBE USED TO KEEP FRESH AIR ALWAYS IN THAT LOST CHAMBER. I FOUND—BESIDES MY POCKET ALARM—

PISTOL JACK'S LOST TREASURE. I WON'T HAVE TO SELL BORDER CASTLE, NOW!



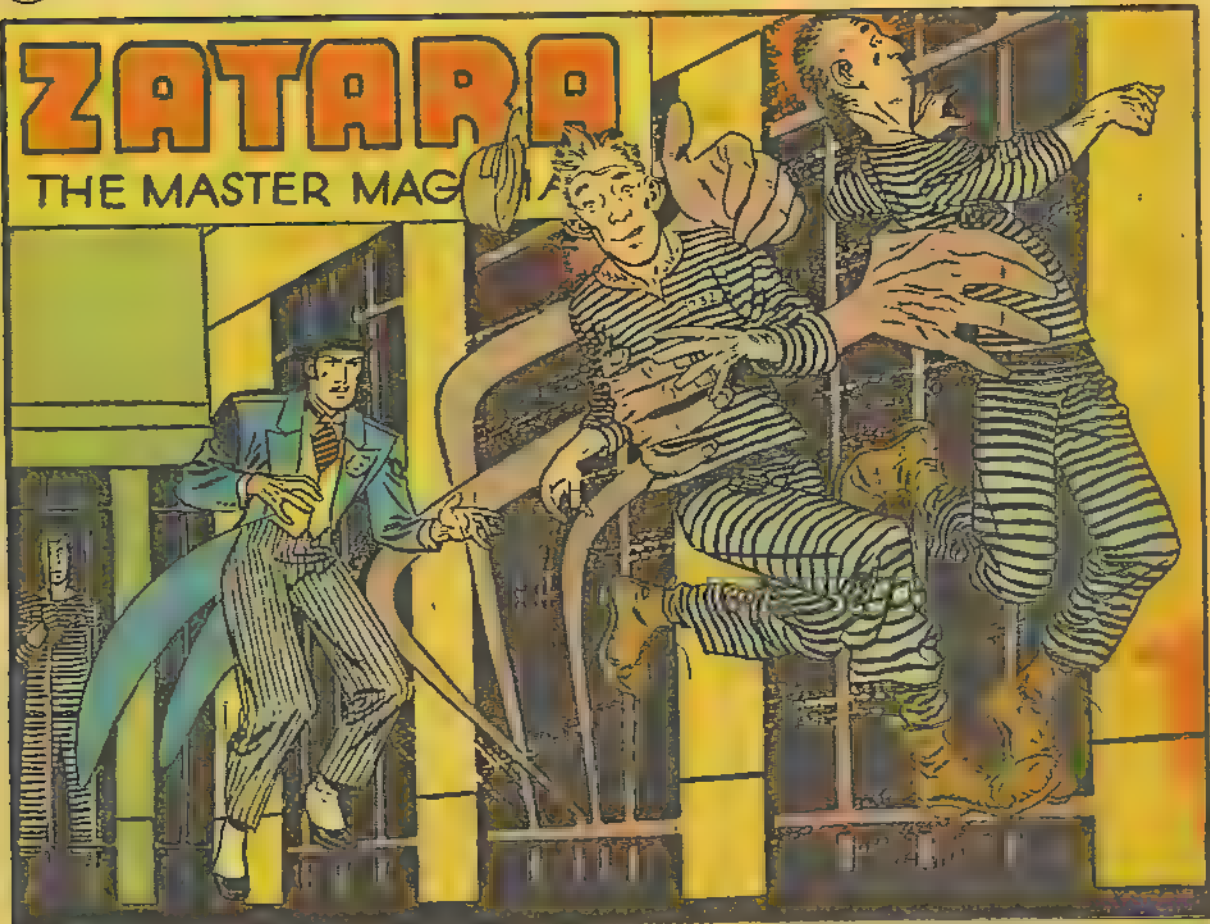
BUT CONGO, HOW DID YOU EVER HAVE THE NERVE TO MAKE A GUESS ABOUT THAT POISONED WINE?

IT WASN'T A GUESS. SINCE THE CASTLE IS OVERRUN WITH MICE, I GAVE SOME OF THEM A LITTLE OF THE WINE FROM EACH GLASS. I SET ASIDE THE ONE GLASS WHOSE WINE DID NOT KILL THE MICE... AND LATER, DRANK IT WITH PERFECT SAFETY!



ZATARA

THE MASTER MAGICIAN



EVEN ZATARA, MASTER MAGICIAN, SOMETIMES GOES TO JAIL...BUT ONLY TO ENTERTAIN THE UNFORTUNATE INMATES WITH HIS MAGIC FEATS! WHEN A FEW CONVICTS, HOWEVER, TRY TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF HIS MAGIC TO ESCAPE, THE WIZARD OF WONDERS HAS TO COME UP WITH A BRAND NEW ACT TO CATCH THE TROUBLEMAKERS WHO STAGE...

"THE BIG-HOUSE BREAK!"

ZATARA ARRIVES TO SERVE A TWO-HOUR STRETCH IN A FAMOUS JAIL!

HERE'S ZATARA, WARDEN... I WISH I DIDN'T HAVE TO STAY ON DUTY AND MISS THE SHOW HE'S GOING TO GIVE!

IN THAT CASE, LET ME GIVE YOU A SAMPLE OF MY MAGIC RIGHT HERE!



RIAH MORF DAEN... EMOCEB DRAEB!*



* READ ZATARA'S MAGIC WORDS BACKWARDS

HA, HA... THAT'S A NEW WAY TO GIVE A HAIRCUT!

NOW I'LL CHANGE YOU BACK...

NO, WAIT A MINUTE, ZATARA...

NOBODY WOULD RECOGNIZE ME IN THIS GETUP... I'D LIKE TO LOOK AROUND AND FIND OUT WHAT PEOPLE REALLY THINK OF ME HERE! SOME OF MY KEEPERS DON'T LIKE WHAT I DO... BUT THEY DON'T SPEAK OUT!

AND IF YOU HIDE THE FACT THAT YOU'RE WARDEN... YOU MIGHT LEARN THINGS! GOOD IDEA!

AND SO, AS THE TRUSTY SHOWS ZATARA AND HIS BEARDED FRIEND AROUND...

THIS IS MR. KEELEY, THE HEAD GUARD...

WE'LL TALK TO HIM ALONE, TRUSTY...

I HEAR THE WARDEN'S A SAP... DOESN'T KNOW HOW TO RUN A JAIL!

YOU'RE TELLING ME... THAT GUY CODDLES THE CONVICTS!

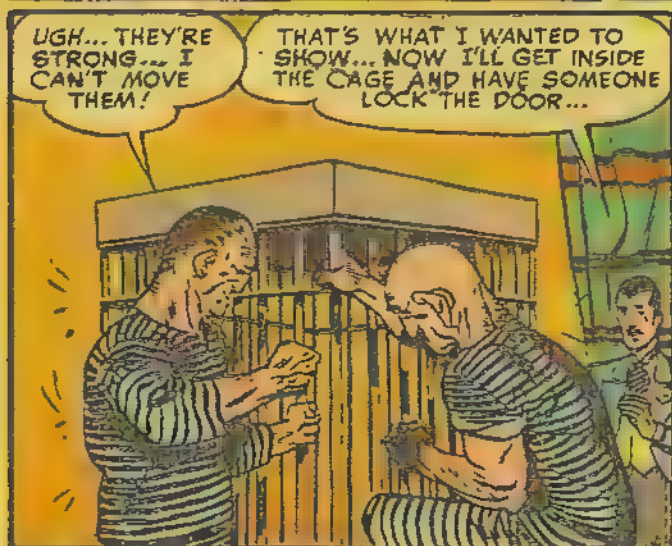
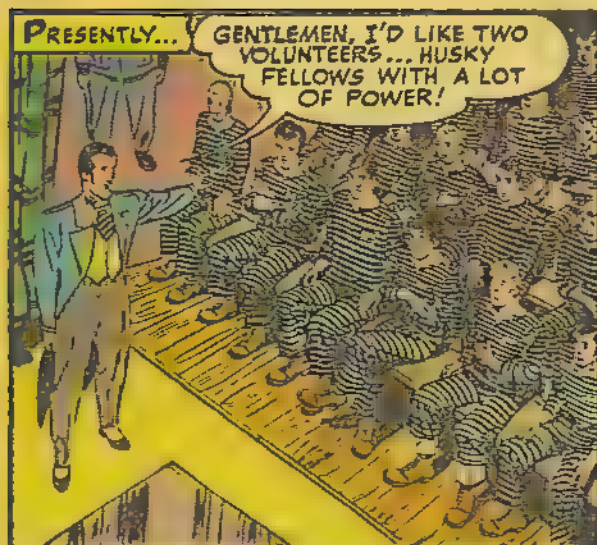
NO BRAINS, THAT'S HIS TROUBLE! THE CONVICTS HERE ARE TOUGH... THEY NEED ROUGH TREATMENT, NOT MAGIC SHOWS!

SO I'VE GOT NO BRAINS, HAVE I? WE'LL SEE...

AFTER A TOUR OF INSPECTION...

MANY OF THE GUARDS THINK I'M TOO EASY ON THEM, ZATARA... EVEN SOME OF THE PRISONERS THEMSELVES THINK I'M A SOFT-HEARTED SAP!

I DON'T THINK SO, WARDEN... BUT WE'LL WORRY ABOUT THAT LATER! I'LL CHANGE YOU BACK... AND GIVE MY SHOW!





MEANWHILE, OUTSIDE THE SHOW...

I DON'T GET IT, SPIDER... EVEN IF EVERYBODY ELSE IS WATCHING ZATARA... HOW CAN THAT HELP US ESCAPE?

YOU'LL SEE, SAP... TOUGH GUY KEELEY DON'T LIKE THE SHOW... WE'LL WORK ON HIM...



THE PRISONERS ARE ESCAPING FROM ZATARA'S SHOW... GET THE TEAR-GAS... QUICK!

I TOLD THAT SAP WARDEN GIVING THE SHOW WAS A BAD IDEA... LUCKY I DIDN'T GO TO SEE IT!



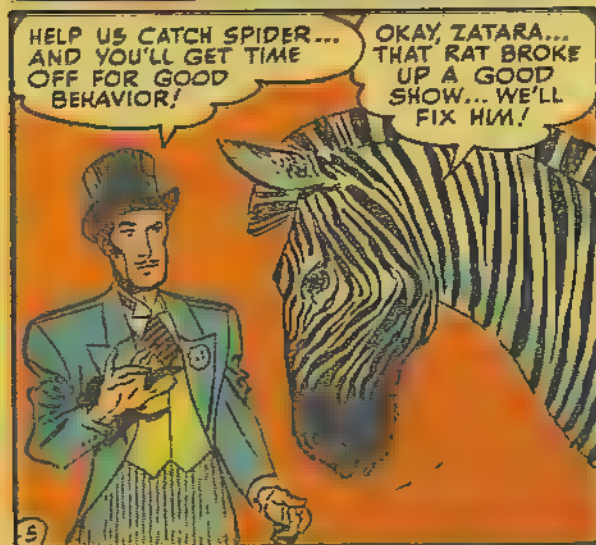
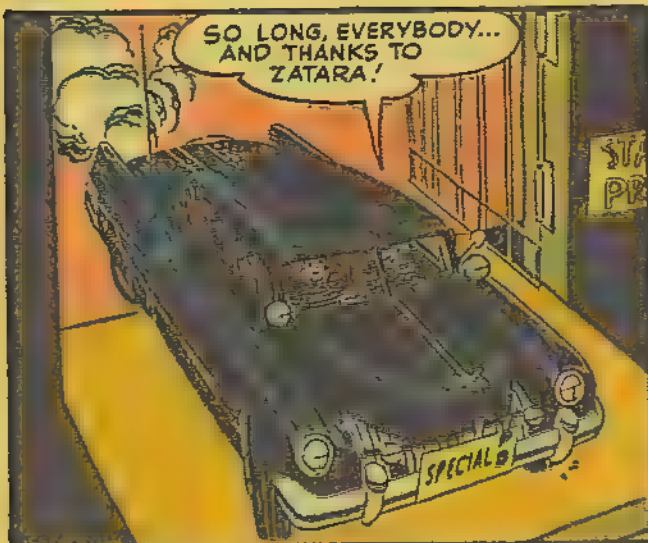
TEAR GAS BOMBS FLY INTO THE AUDIENCE... AND PRESENTLY GUARDS AND CONVICTS MILL AROUND IN MAD CONFUSION!



WHILE, OUTSIDE...

YOU DID ENOUGH FOR US, CHUM! YOU FIXED THE OTHER GUARDS SO THAT THEY CAN'T FOLLOW... NOW WE'LL JUST GRAB YOUR KEYS AND GUN, AND SCRAM!







BUT A FEW WORDS OF MAGIC FROM ZATARA
TURN THE SITUATION UPSIDE DOWN...

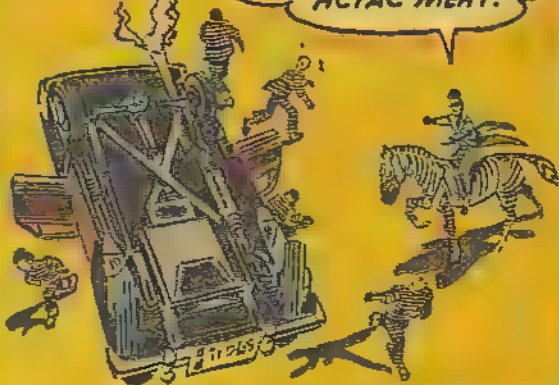
S'YOB ANANAB LEEP...
WORG NI TNORF
FO RAC!

YUI!

COVISH

KEEP GOING,
BOYS... HE CAN'T
CATCH US ALL!

THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK!
THE CAR HAS ALREADY
TURNED TURTLE...SO I'LL
CHANGE IT AGAIN! RAC...
NRUT OTNI SUPOTCO!
HCTAC MEHT!



WILL YOU COME
BACK QUIETLY?

ANYTHING YOU SAY,
ZATARA... ONLY MAKE
IT LET GO!



LATER, AS THE ESCAPED PRISONERS ARE
RETURNED...

THE RATS RUINED
THE SHOW... THEY
GOT PLENTY COMING
TO THEM!

EASY, MEN... THE
WARDEN WILL TAKE
CARE OF PUNISH-
ING THEM!



WELL, WARDEN... YOUR POLICY
IS A SUCCESS WITH MOST
PRISONERS! THEY WANT MORE
SHOWS... MORE DECENT
TREATMENT... AND THEY'LL
STOP THE CONVICTS WHO
TRY TO TAKE ADVANTAGE
OF YOU!

YES, AS I'VE
TOLD KEELEY-
MOST OF
THEM CAN
STILL BE
TURNED INTO
GOOD
CITIZENS!



EVEN KEELEY HAS
LEARNED NOT TO BE
SO TOUGH... NEXT
TIME HE WON'T
TOSS TEAR GAS
IN SUCH A
HURRY!

DON'T RUB IT IN,
WARDEN... I THINK
HE'S CHANGED HIS
MIND ABOUT YOUR
BEING A SAP...
NOW HE THINKS
HE IS!



The
End

VIGILANTE



INTO THE LITTLE TOWN OF COTTONWOOD GULCH COME THREE MEN - MEN WHO LOOK WITH HUNGRY EYES AT THE THREE ORDINARY OBJECTS ON DISPLAY IN COTTONWOOD GULCH'S MUSEUM OF THE WEST!

AND IT IS THE GREED OF THESE THREE MEN - AND THE STRANGE REASON FOR IT - THAT LEAD THE VIGILANTE AND HIS PRAIRIE PARTNER, STUFF, INTO THE ODD ADVENTURE OF...

**"THE SPUR,
THE HANDCUFFS
AND THE
BRANDING IRON!"**

MOMENTOS OF THE OLD WEST ARE ON EXHIBIT IN COTTONWOOD GULCH'S MUSEUM -- THE REVOLVER THAT KILLED WILD BILL HICKOK, THE FAVORITE RIFLE OF SAM BASS, TEXAS OUTLAW, AND SO FORTH.

THIS EXHIBIT SURE MAKES THE OLD WEST LIVE AGAIN, DOESN'T IT, STUFF?

IT SURE DOES, GREG!



HERE'S THE FIRST STAGECOACH WELLS-FARGO RAN THROUGH COTTONWOOD GULCH! STILL IN FIRST-RATE CONDITION!



A LONE VISITOR PAUSES BEFORE A SMALL DISPLAY TABLE, HIS EYES SHINING WITH GREED...

THAT'S THE PAIR OF HANDCUFFS I'VE BEEN SEARCHING FOR. I - I MUST HAVE THEM - NO MATTER WHAT THE COST!



THOSE 'CUFFS! I'LL GIVE YOU A THOUSAND DOLLARS FOR THEM!

THIS IS A MUSEUM, MISTER. ITS THINGS AREN'T FOR SALE!

I'LL GET THOSE BRACELETS IF IT TAKES EVERY CENT I OWN! I'LL GO SEE THE CURATOR. HE'LL SELL THEM TO ME!

WONDER WHY HE WANTS THEM SO BADLY THAT HE'S WILLING TO PAY A THOUSAND DOLLARS FOR THEM?

I'LL GIVE YOU FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS FOR THAT PAIR OF HANDCUFFS!

I CAN'T SEEM TO MAKE YOU UNDERSTAND! IT IS NOT FOR SALE!



THAT NIGHT, AS COTTONWOOD GULCH SLEEPS...

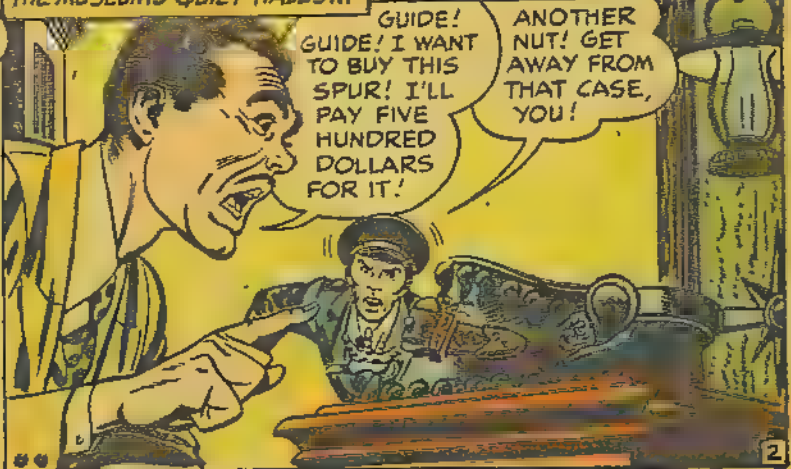
THE FOLLOWING DAY, ANOTHER EXCITED VOICE IS RAISED IN THE MUSEUM'S QUIET HALLS...

I'LL LEAVE A HUNDRED DOLLARS FOR IT. WITH THE MONEY, THEY CAN BUY A DOZEN MORE HANDCUFFS THAT LOOK JUST LIKE IT--BUT THIS PAIR I MUST HAVE FOR MYSELF!



GUIDE! GUIDE! I WANT TO BUY THIS SPUR! I'LL PAY FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS FOR IT!

ANOTHER NUT! GET AWAY FROM THAT CASE, YOU!



AT THAT MOMENT, IN THE CURATOR'S OFFICE...

I AGREE THAT IT'S THEFT, VIGILANTE, BUT THIS HUNDRED DOLLARS THE THIEF LEFT WILL MORE THAN PAY FOR WHAT HE STOLE

WELL, I THOUGHT I'D JUST OFFER MY SERVICES TO RECOVER THOSE HANDCUFFS. BUT ---

I THANK YOU, VIGILANTE, BUT I'VE DECIDED TO FORGET THE INCIDENT.

ANOTHER BUYER SIR THIS ONE WANTS THE SPUR IN THAT ABNER MARCH COLLECTION. OFFERED FIVE HUNDRED FOR IT'



MAYBE MY OFFER WAS TOO LOW! I'LL GIVE YOU FIVE THOUSAND!

WHAT'S COME OVER PEOPLE ALL OF A SUDDEN?

MAKING AN OFFER TO BUY A MUSEUM'S PROPERTY IS NO CRIME. I CAN'T GO INTO ACTION YET...

THAT EVENING, IN THE HOTEL SUITE SHARED BY THE VIGILANTE AND STUFF.

BUT I CAN KEEP AN EYE ON THAT SPUR IF THIS HOMBRE FOLLOWS THE PATTERN SET BY THE OTHER MAN, HE'LL TRY TO STEAL IT.

IT'S A FUNNY KIND OF THIEF WHO LEAVES MORE THAN THE VALUE OF THE OBJECT HE TAKES!



JUST THE SAME I MEAN TO LEARN WHY THEY'RE TAKING SUCH VALUELESS, ORDINARY THINGS--HERE HE COMES NOW!

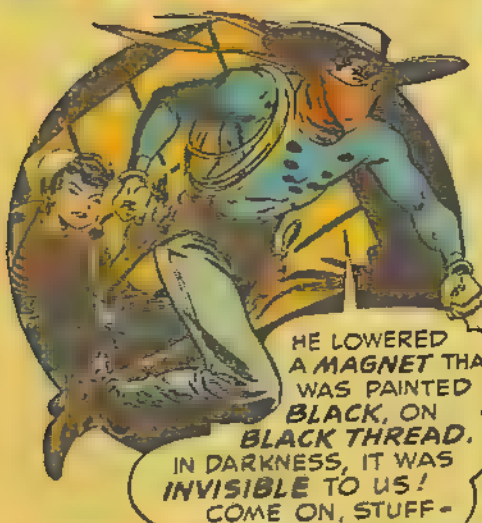
!GULP! THAT'S THE-- VIGILANTE IN THERE! I-I SAW HIM CLEAR AS SUNLIGHT NEAR THAT STAGECOACH HE HE MUSTN'T SEE ME...



MINUTE AFTER MINUTE DRAGS BY,
SLOWLY THE MOONLIGHT MOVES
ACROSS THE FLOOR, AND STILL
NO INTRUDER ENTERS...

I'D HAVE SWORN I
SAW HIM IN THE
DOORWAY. MAYBE
WE SCARED HIM
OFF.

YEAR! THIS
HAS BEEN A
REAL WILD
GOOSE CHASE...
YEEOWW!



HE LOWERED
A MAGNET THAT
WAS PAINTED
BLACK, ON
BLACK THREAD.
IN DARKNESS, IT WAS
INVISIBLE TO US!
COME ON, STUFF -

BUT WHAT OF
THE STEALER
OF THE
HANDCUFFS?
EARLY THE
NEXT MORNING
OUT ON THE
MESA...

THERE! I'VE
WAITED A
LONG TIME
FOR THIS...

LOOK, VIG!
THE SPUR--
AND A
SHOWER OF
MONEY TO
PAY FOR IT!

HUH! WHILE WE WATCHED
THE DOOR, THAT HOMBRE
CLIMBED TO THE ROOF
AND OPENED THE TRAP-
DOOR THAT'S USED
TO LOWER THINGS
TOO BIG TO ENTER
THE MUSEUM
THROUGH
THE DOOR!



ALL HE HAD TO DO WAS
DROP OFF THAT LOW ROOF
AND RUN. NOT MUCH CHANCE
OF CATCHING HIM NOW.
HE'S GONE!



AT THAT SAME MOMENT, IN COTTONWOOD
GULCH, STILL A THIRD MAN VISITS THE
MUSEUM'S CURATOR..

I'LL PAY THREE THOUSAND
DOLLARS FOR THAT INTER-
LOCKING-CIRCLES
BRANDING IRON
IN THE MAIN
ROOM.

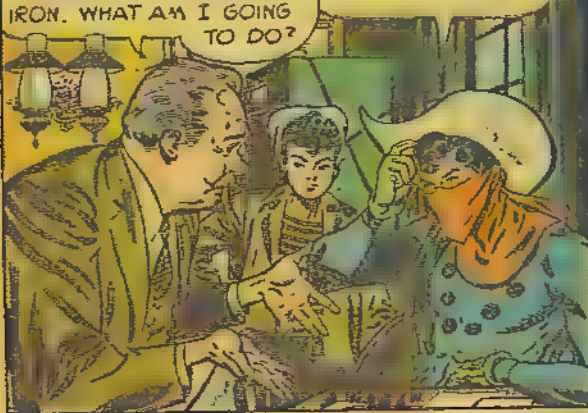
WHAT? ANOTHER
ONE? I'M
SORRY, SIR--
NOT FOR SALE!



AN HOUR LATER...

ANOTHER MAN WAS IN, TRYING TO BUY AN ORDINARY BRANDING IRON. WHAT AM I GOING TO DO?

NOTHING AT ALL, I HAVE AN IDEA! STUFF AND I WILL VISIT A BLACKSMITH, AND RETURN BEFORE CLOSING TIME...



EARLY THE NEXT MORNING, AN EXCITED STUFF BURSTS INTO THE HOTEL ROOM WHERE THE VIGILANTE IS RELAXING...

VIG! THAT BRANDING IRON WAS STOLEN LAST NIGHT, AND MONEY LEFT TO BUY ANOTHER!

HMMM THAT SO?



YOU DON'T SEEM VERY EXCITED! ARE YOU GOING TO SIT THERE READING?

I'M READING ABNER MARCH'S DIARY, STUFF. THERE HAD TO BE SOME CLUE THAT LINKED THOSE THREE STOLEN OBJECTS. ABNER MARCH DONATED ALL THREE OF THEM TO THE MUSEUM!



MARCH WAS QUITE AN HOMBRE. HE OWNED A STRETCH OF ROCK CANYONS AND FLAT DESERT LAND WEST OF COTTONWOOD GULCH. HE'S SUPPOSED TO HAVE THREE GOLD MINES HIDDEN AWAY-- WHERE, NO MAN KNOWS!



"HE ALSO HAD THREE SONS" (VIGILANTE TELLS STUFF) "WHO WERE ALWAYS FIGHTING AND QUARRELING AMONG THEMSELVES..."

I'LL GET YUH, JUBE!

YAH, YUH COULDN'T PUNCH YORE WAY OUT OF A PAPER BAG!

I CAN FIGHT BOTH OF YUH!

STOP THAT! STOP IT!



"THOSE BOYS GREW UP BITTER AGAINST EACH OTHER, IT BROKE THEIR FATHER'S HEART. ON HIS DEATHBED..."

IN THOSE ENVELOPES YUH'LL FIND CLUES TO THE TREASURE I'M LEAVING YUH BOYS. THAT TREASURE WILL BE YOURS-- IF YUH WORK TOGETHER!





APPARENTLY, THE BOYS CUT LOOSE WHEN MARCH DIED. THEY WENT THEIR WAYS, WITH THEIR CLUES.

SURE! EACH ONE WAS LEFT ONE OF THOSE HIDDEN GOLD MINES! THE SPUR AND THE HANDCUFFS AND THE BRANDING IRON MUST CONTAIN THE LAST CLUE OF ALL!



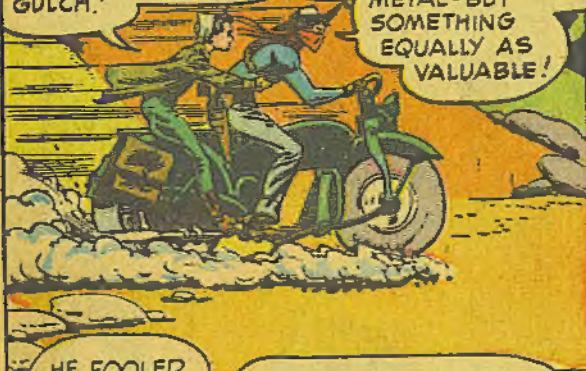
AT THAT MOMENT, MILES AWAY...

DAD WENT TO A LOT OF TROUBLE. WONDER HOW TH' OTHERS ARE MAKIN' OUT?... NOT THAT I CARE!



BUT, VIG - COME TO THINK OF IT, THERE AREN'T ANY GOLD MINES AROUND COTTONWOOD GULCH.

THAT'S THE WAY I FIGURED IT OUT, STUFF. OLD ABNER MUST HAVE LEFT SOMETHING ELSE TO HIS BOYS. NOT PRECIOUS METAL - BUT SOMETHING EQUALLY AS VALUABLE!



HE FOOLED YUH, TOO, RED. HAW! HAW!

THREE THUNDERING IDIOTS - AN' YOU, BEIN' THE BIGGEST OF US THREE, ARE THE **BIGGEST IDIOT!**

I'LL SHOW YUH WHO'S AN IDIOT.



THE THIRD SON OF ABNER MARCH PRESSES HIS STOLEN BRANDING IRON INTO THE TWIN CIRCLES CUT INTO THE ROCK AND LAUGHTER FILLS THE AIR...

NOW I'LL GET MY SHARE OF THAT TREASURE! HMMM... NOTHING HAPPENS! WHO-WHO'S LAUGHING?

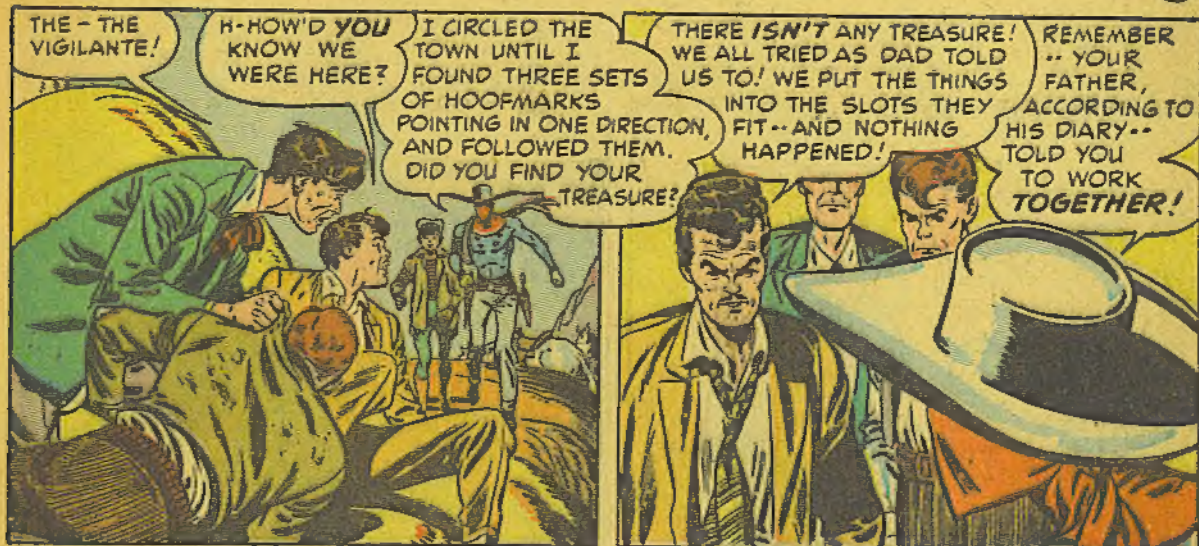


HAHA! HAHAHAHA!

VIG! AREN'T YOU GOING TO STOP THEM?



WHY, STUFF? LET THEM KNOCK SOME SENSE INTO EACH OTHER, BEFORE WE STEP IN!



THE - THE VIGILANTE!

H-HOW'D YOU KNOW WE WERE HERE?

I CIRCLED THE TOWN UNTIL I FOUND THREE SETS OF HOOFO MARKS POINTING IN ONE DIRECTION, AND FOLLOWED THEM. DID YOU FIND YOUR TREASURE?

THERE *ISN'T* ANY TREASURE! WE ALL TRIED AS DAD TOLD US TO! WE PUT THE THINGS INTO THE SLOTS THEY FIT--AND NOTHING HAPPENED!

REMEMBER -- YOUR FATHER, ACCORDING TO HIS DIARY-- TOLD YOU TO WORK TOGETHER!



NEVER! I WOULDN'T WORK WITH THOSE COYOTES FOR ALL THE WEALTH IN CHINA!

THERE THEY GO, STUFF--THREE YOUNG IDIOTS WHO NEED A LESSON!

ME, NEITHER!

THAT NIGHT IN COTTONWOOD GULCH...

VIGILANTE! RED STOLE MY HANDCUFFS!

-AND MY SPURS! HE'S GOING TO USE THEM TOGETHER! YUH TIPPED HIM OFF TO THAT!

RELAX, BOYS! I PROMISE YOU! RED CAN'T GET THAT TREASURE BY HIMSELF!



ALL NIGHT LONG, HANK AND JUBAL MARCH STALK BACK AND FORTH, THE STRAIN SHOWING IN THEIR SWEAT-BEADED BROWS AND HAGGARD FACES...

STOP PLAYING THAT MUSIC! IT'S KILLING ME! BY THIS TIME, RED MUST HAVE THE TREASURE!

HE *STOLE* MY SPUR! TOOK IT FROM ME. MY OWN BROTHER! IF-IF HE WANTS IT THAT BAD, HE CAN HAVE IT!

AT DAWN, THE DOOR OPENS ONCE AGAIN! RED MARCH LURCHES IN...

TAKE THEM! THEY DIDN'T WORK! I SPENT THE NIGHT ALONE OUT THERE, REALIZING WHAT A FOOL I WAS! HANK! JUBE! FORGIVE ME FOR STEALIN' FROM YUH!





WE'VE ALL BEEN WRONG! DAD WANTED US TO VALUE OUR FRIENDSHIP ABOVE ALL THOUGHTS OF TREASURE!

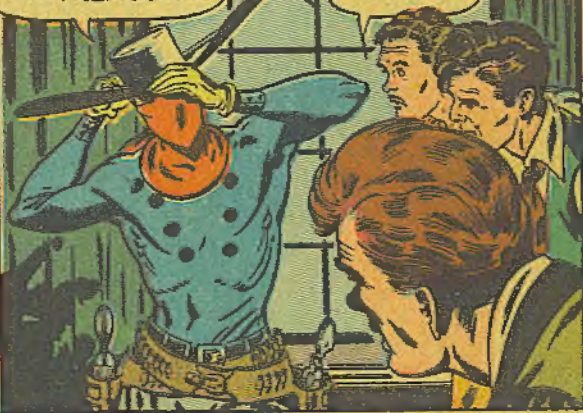
I RECKON THAT'S WHY VIGILANTE KEPT US HERE - TO LET THE IDEA KIND OF SINK INTO OUR THICK SKULLS!



BUT NOW THAT YOU'VE LEARNED YOUR LESSON, LET'S GO FIND THE **TREASURE!**

HUH!!? BUT THERE ISN'T ANY!

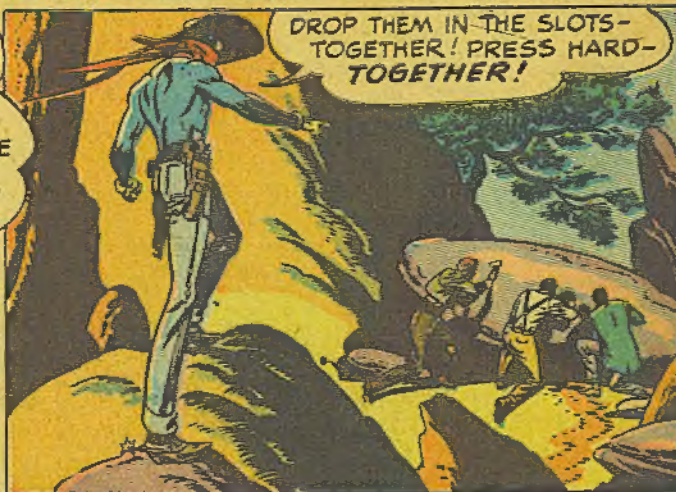
DIDN'T I TRY ALL THREE OF THOSE THINGS? I TELL YOU THEY DON'T WORK!



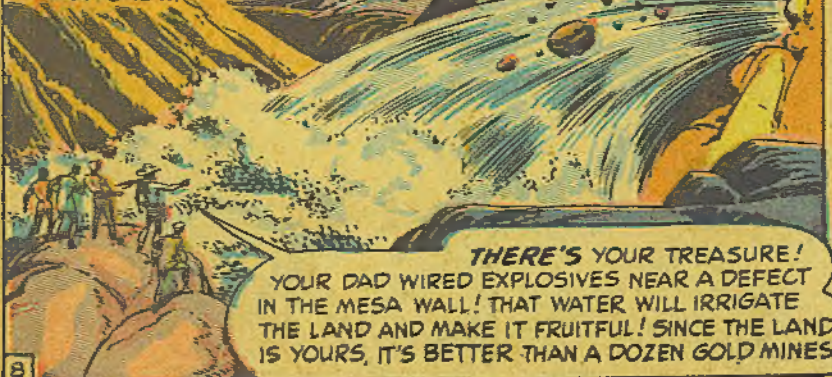
THAT'S BECAUSE YOU DIDN'T HAVE THE **RIGHT** BRANDING IRON! MY FRIEND THE SHERIFF MADE A DUPLICATE ONE THAT I PUT IN THE MUSEUM FOR YOU TO STEAL! IT WAS JUST ENOUGH OFF BALANCE AND WEIGHT NOT TO WORK - NOW LET'S GO!



DROP THEM IN THE SLOTS - TOGETHER! PRESS HARD - TOGETHER!



AS THE SPUR, THE HANDCUFFS AND THE BRANDING IRON TOUCH THE ROCK DEPRESSIONS, THE WALL OF THE MESA BURSTS OPEN WITH A SULLEN ROAR, AND A SURGING TORRENT OF WATER FROM AN UNDERGROUND RIVER FLOODS INTO THE ROCK CANYONS...



THERE'S YOUR TREASURE! YOUR DAD WIRED EXPLOSIVES NEAR A DEFECT IN THE MESA WALL! THAT WATER WILL IRRIGATE THE LAND AND MAKE IT FRUITFUL! SINCE THE LAND IS YOURS, IT'S BETTER THAN A DOZEN GOLD MINES!

TODAY, COTTONWOOD GULCH IS THE MOST IMPORTANT CITY IN THE STATE, SURROUNDED BY FRUITFUL VALLEYS THAT BURST WITH THE ABUNDANCE OF GOOD FOOD, IT IS PROUD OF ITS **THREE BROTHERS' FARMS AND RANCHES!** AND IT IS PROUD OF ITS NEW MUSEUM, TOO - AND THE PLAIN SPUR, THE ORDINARY HANDCUFFS, AND THE RUSTY BRANDING IRON THAT MADE IT ALL POSSIBLE!



THE END

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